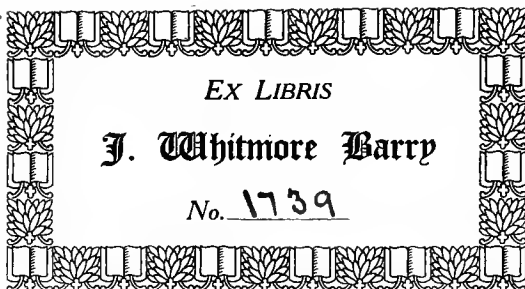


HERMON
OULD

PR
6029
U36B5
1914



CORNELL
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY



THE
JOSEPH WHITMORE BARRY
DRAMATIC LIBRARY

THE GIFT OF
TWO FRIENDS
OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY

1934

~~DATE DUE~~

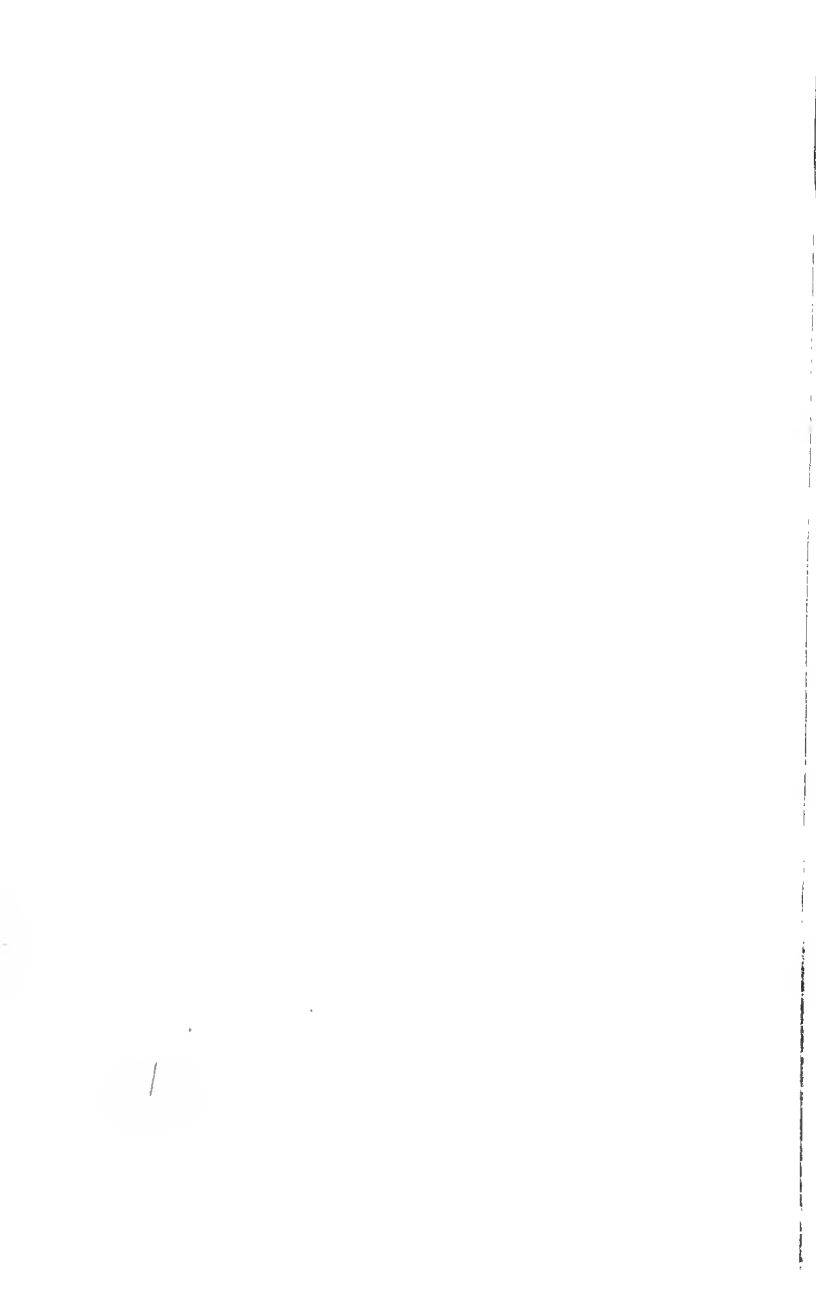
~~LIBRARY~~

Cornell University Library
PR 6029.U36B5 1914

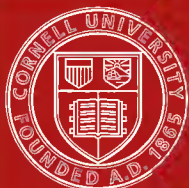
Between sunset and dawn.



1924 013 660 646



BETWEEN SUNSET AND DAWN



Cornell University
Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

BETWEEN SUNSET AND DAWN. A
PLAY IN FOUR SCENES, BY HERMON
OULD

LONDON: SIDGWICK & JACKSON, LTD.
3 ADAM STREET, ADELPHI. MCMXIV.

A6534.13

Copyright, 1914, by Sidgwick & Jackson, Ltd.

All rights reserved.

TO
NORMAN M^CKINNEL

Between Sunset and Dawn was produced for the first time at the Vaudeville Theatre on the 23rd October 1913, under the management of Messrs Norman M^cKinnel and Frederick Whelen, the cast being as follows :

JIM HARRIS . . .	MR NORMAN M ^c KINNEL
MRS HARRIS . . .	MISS ADA KING
LIZ HIGGINS . . .	MISS MAY BLAYNEY
BILL HIGGINS . . .	MR EDMOND BREON
MRS HIGGINS . . .	MISS ALICE MANSFIELD
MRS LANSDOWNE . . .	MISS ETHEL MARRYAT
CURLY TOM . . .	MR HAROLD BRADLY
AN OLD MAN . . .	MR ERNEST G. COVE
A RESPECTABLE WOMAN .	MISS FLORENCE HARWOOD

The play produced by Mr Norman M^cKinnel.

THE PERSONS CONCERNED

JIM HARRIS.

MRS HARRIS, *his mother.*

BILL HIGGINS.

LIZ HIGGINS, *his wife.*

MRS HIGGINS, *his mother.*

MRS LANSDOWNE, *his landlady.*

CURLY TOM.

AN OLD MAN.

A RESPECTABLE WOMAN.

*The incident takes place in South London one Summer
night between sunset and dawn.*

BETWEEN SUNSET AND DAWN

SCENE I

A June evening, about seven o'clock.

The kitchen of MRS HARRIS'S "doss-house." The room is sparsely furnished; a couple of tables, a few wooden chairs, a gas-stove and a cupboard make up the tale of movables. The main door is in the background: entering this, the visitor looking to the right would see the door leading to MRS HARRIS'S bedroom, and, in the back wall, a shutter let into the wall inscribed "Pay Here."

MRS HARRIS, a woman of some sixty years, fat, dirty, sharp-tempered occasionally, but generally too lazy to be anything but fat and dirty, is seated at one of the tables, sleeping, with her head propped up by her arm. She is not a pleasant person to contemplate, with her dirty clothes carelessly put on.

Presently JIM HARRIS, her son, slouches in from the main door. He is a big, bony man of about thirty. His face is not unprepossessing: high cheek-bones, sleepy

blue eyes, brown hair and moustache. He has an air of dissatisfaction about him : one feels he does not respect himself overmuch. He is dressed in the nondescript garb peculiar to the poorer classes not engaged in any distinctive occupation. He does not remove his cap.

JIM. [*as soon as he enters the room.*] Anythink t'eat ?

MRS HARRIS. [*rousing herself.*] Gawd, 'ow you startled me ! W'ere did *you* spring from ?

JIM. [*shortly.*] W'ere d'yer fink ? [*Peremptorily.*] Got 'nythink t'w'eat ?

MRS HARRIS. [*unconcernedly.*] I dessay you'll find sutthink in the cupboard if yer take the trouble ter look.

JIM eyes her with an air of disgust ; makes no remark, but goes over to the cupboard and extracts a plate of faggots.

JIM. 'Oo can eat faggits this weather I sh'd like ter know ?

MRS HARRIS. [*settling herself to sleep.*] Go withaht an' bust !

JIM lifts his arm, threatening but not intending to strike her. He makes for the door.

JIM. I can get wot I want ahtside if you can't pervide it.

He reaches the door and turns the handle : this arouses MRS HARRIS, who gets off her chair with a lazy air of long-suffering and goes over to the cupboard.

MRS HARRIS. Come 'ere ! [JIM turns.] 'Ere's some 'am. Yer can't see a ninch before yer bloomin' nose.

She takes a paper bag from the cupboard, and gives it to JIM, who extracts the ham, and puts it on a plate. MRS HARRIS takes a knife and fork from the table-drawer and throws them down on the table unceremoniously. They both sit down.

MRS HARRIS. [after a brief pause.] W'ere yer bin terday ? Wotcher bin doin' ?

JIM. [satirically.] Anythink else yer'd like ter know ?

MRS HARRIS. No, thank yer kindly, not jes' nah.

JIM. [with his mouth full.] Well, if yer want ter know, I ain't bin now'ere. I met Bill 'Iggins this mornin' ; ain't seen 'im fer some time, so we bin tergether all day. [*He continues in a tone of self-defence.*] My work's 'ere of a night, so don't you ferget it. If I spends the 'ole

evenin' an' night 'ere, lookin' arter this 'ere show, scarce gettin' a wink o' sleep, you ain't git nothink ter say abaht wot I do wi' me days.

MRS HARRIS. Law lummy, 'oo's sayin' anythink ?

JIM. [*unappeased.*] Well, don't, that's all.

MRS HARRIS. You are a . . . [*She mumbles incoherently.*] Wot's Bill 'Iggins bin doin' of lately ?

JIM. [*facetiously.*] Ev'rybody 'e can so far's I can tell. [*He guffaws.*] [*Contemplatively.*] Funny bloke, Bill. Decent sort o' cove 'e seems, but 'e ain't got no guts in 'im, Bill ain't ; 'e's got a bloomin' 'andshake as flabby as a stick o' rhubub. . . .

MRS HARRIS. I alwus liked Bill 'Iggins meself.

JIM. [*contemptuously.*] You would : sort a man a woman *would* like. 'E's bin on the booze an' 'is ole woman's gorne an' left 'im.

MRS HARRIS. [*sententiously.*] Don't wonder at it. A man wot don't drink is a sawny-suck-eggs, but a man wot drinks more than's good fer 'im ain't fit comp'ny fer respectable people. [*She hugs herself comfortably.*] Thank Gawd I know w'en ter stop !

JIM. The drink's got so soaked inter *your*

innards there ain't no need fer you ever ter stop.
[*He guffaws.*]

MRS HARRIS. [*whimpering.*] That's 'ow yer own kids speak abaht yer. On'y strangers appreciates yer.

The sun goes behind a cloud and the room becomes gradually darker.

JIM. [*impatiently.*] Ol, shut up. [*A slight pause.*] Ole Bill 'Iggins never could keep orf the drink—'im sech a 'an'some feller too: all the gals mad arter 'im.

MRS HARRIS *sighs*.

I've arsked 'im ter pop rahnd ternight.

MRS HARRIS. 'Oo d'e marry?

JIM. I dunno. Nob'dy dahn ahr way, s'far's I know. . . . Emma Jenkins wantid 'im—made up to 'im like one o'clock; but 'e wasn't 'avin' any. . . . 'E's a bit cut up abaht 'is ole gal a-leavin' of 'im. A real elegant gal 'e says she was.

MRS HARRIS. [*decisively.*] Well, wot d'e go an' knock 'er abaht for then?

JIM. [*protestingly.*] I didn't say 'e knocked 'er abaht.

MRS HARRIS. [*knowingly.*] Don't you tell me! Didn't *say* say, no; but don't yer think I know? She wouldn't 'a' left 'im if 'e 'adn't

'a' knocked 'er abaht: gals don't leave good 'omes fer nothink.

She grins knowingly and wriggles self-complacently.

JIM. [*philosophically.*] Ol, I dessay—w'en 'e's drunk. 'E's not a bad sort, Bill, but 'e do drink, no kid abaht it.

The pattering of rain is heard against the window.

'Ullo! I thought we was goin' to 'ave a storm.

He goes to the window and looks out.

Blimy! drops as big as tanners!

MRS HARRIS. [*complacently.*] This'll fetch 'em in. Wot's the time?

JIM. Abaht seven or 'ar' parst. [*He returns to the table.*]

A slight flash of lightning, followed by a faint peal of thunder. JIM looks up from his plate, takes a final mouthful of ham and puts his knife and fork back on the table.

A shuffling of feet is heard outside; then a knock at the shutter. JIM rises, crosses over and pulls back the shutter, showing the head of an OLD MAN through the aperture. He is a poor old man, dirty and very weary. He hands coins to JIM.

OLD MAN. [*shakily.*] Two penn'orth ter-night, Jim.

JIM *takes a brass ticket from the wall and hands it to the* OLD MAN.

JIM. [*kindly.*] 'Ere y'are, Daddy. Fourth floor; you'll find someb'dy there.

OLD MAN. [*groaning.*] Awright.

JIM *slams the shutter to, and one hears the retreating footsteps of the* OLD MAN *ascending the stairs.*

MRS HARRIS. 'Oo wus that?

JIM. Daddy Breakin'fast. On'y 'ad two penn'orth ternight.

MRS HARRIS. Things is gettin' wuss an' wuss, wot wiv Cahnty Cahncil inspections an' the rest of it, w'y ther ain't 'ardly any profit left fer ahrselves.

JIM. [*mumbling.*] You make a tidy bit aht of it; don't try ter kid me.

JIM *is about to sit down when another footstep is heard off, followed by a knock at the shutter. JIM slouches complainingly over to the shutter and draws it back.*

Well?

The head of CURLY TOM *is protruded through the opening. He is a lad of some nineteen years, with a head of fiery curly hair. He is*

overflowing with mirth and good-humour. His garments consist of a ragged pair of striped trousers, a morning coat much too large for him; a "dicky" and the remnants of a tie; he wears neither waistcoat nor hat.

CURLY TOM. Pip, pip!

JIM. [*gruffly.*] Nah then! None o' yer sauce! Wotcher want?

CURLY TOM. [*sauvely.*] My deah sir, my modest requirements is merely a place upon w'ich ter rest me weary limbs.

JIM. No 'ank!

CURLY TOM. Tryin' weather, eh, wot!

JIM. [*angrily.*] Stow it; wotcher want?

CURLY TOM. [*drawing.*] Don't be annoyed, ole fellah! [*Then suddenly.*] Penn'orth. [*He hands JIM a coin.*]

JIM. [*briefly.*] That's a bad un. [*He returns it.*]

CURLY TOM. A thousand pardons! My mistake, my mistake entirely, ole chappie! So sorry! Heah's anothah! [*He hands JIM another coin.*]

JIM. [*taking and examining the coin.*] Aw right. Come rahnd.

He shuts the shutter once more and crosses over and unlocks the door, admitting CURLY TOM.]

JIM. You can stop 'ere till bed-time ; then up yer go and no 'ank.

CURLY TOM. [*surveying the scene with quick, sparkling eyes.*] Bah jove ! The first arrival ! [*He crosses over to MRS HARRIS, who smiles indulgently upon him.*] Business bad, madam ? [*He bows deferentially and she laughs coquettishly.*]

MRS HARRIS. Alwus is. Never knoo the time it wasn't.

CURLY TOM. Deah, deah ! The beastly fine weather we've bin 'avin' of late I prezoom !

MRS HARRIS. [*endeavouring without success to affect his "aristocratic" manner.*] No daht, yer Lordship, if yer'll excuse the impudence of me addressin' of yer so familiar-like.

CURLY TOM. [*grandiloquently.*] Tut, tut !

The rain is now falling heavily ; there are intermittent flashes of lightning and peals of not very formidable thunder.

A timid footstep follows the swing of an outer door, and then a timid knock at the shutter. No notice is taken of this at first. It is repeated. MRS HARRIS and CURLY TOM look up, but JIM—buried in thought—apparently does not hear it.

MRS HARRIS. Someb'dy there.

JIM. Never 'eard nothink.

He crosses over to the shutter with a bad grace and pulls it violently aside. The head of LIZ HIGGINS appears in the aperture.

Well ?

LIZ HIGGINS. [*in a low voice, timid and hesitating.*] Can I 'ave shelter 'ere fer the night an' pay fer it in work ?

MRS HARRIS *struts portentously across the room and speaks over JIM'S shoulder.*

MRS HARRIS. Wot's that ?

JIM. [*indifferently.*] Wants ter know whether she can do a bit o' work instid o' payin' fer a night's lodgin'.

MRS HARRIS. [*gruffly.*] Ain't yer got no oof ?

LIZ. [*meekly.*] No.

MRS HARRIS. Wotyer done wiv it ? . . . 'Ere, come inside. Jim, open that there door.

JIM. [*remonstrating.*] Aw right, keep yer 'air on.

He opens the door and holds it open, beckoning to LIZ, who comes inside nervously.

She is a young woman of perhaps five-and-twenty, rather short than tall, slim but not thin ; her features are remarkably regular : the nose small, the mouth small also, but the lips rather full and not without a trace of sensuousness. She has a lot of red-

brown hair. Her eyes are large and unsuspicious. Her movements are normally slow: she lacks vitality. She is dressed neatly in blouse and skirt, not yet visible because they are covered by a long cloth coat.

CURLY TOM. Hullo, me old sport! Dahn on yer luck?

MRS HARRIS. Shut up, you, Curly Tom; speak w'en yer spoke to. . . . Nah then, young woman, wot can yer do?

LIZ. I can do anythink abaht the 'ouse, sech as cleanin', or cookin', or washin' up.

MRS HARRIS. [*taking her measure.*] Oh, yer can, can yer? [*Giving the matter her consideration.*] Wot sort o' lodgin' d'y'expect?

LIZ. [*lethargically.*] I don't care much wot it is, s'long's it's shelter. It's pourin' 'eavens 'ard now an' I don't want ter stay out in it all night.

MRS HARRIS. [*with the air of one granting a favour.*] You can sleep wiv the other women if yer like, and clean the 'all in the mornin'. [*Half inclined to withdraw.*] It don't want doin' really—it wus on'y done a fortnight ago— but I don't mind, if yer really 'ard up.

LIZ. Thank yer kindly. I'm very grateful.

CURLY TOM. [*friskily*]. Gaw' blimy, that

takes the bally cake ! Thank yer fer nothink. Ain't I gen'rous, I *don't* think.

MRS HARRIS. 'Ere, you, if yer can't keep a still tongue in yer 'ead you'd better clear aht and keep yer dirty stivers.

JIM. [*surlily.*] Chuck it, spoilin' business ! Cam't yer take a joke ?

There is a tap at the shutter. When JIM draws back the shutter one catches a glimpse of the head of a RESPECTABLE WOMAN.

RESPECTABLE WOMAN. Can I have a room for the night ?

JIM. [*respectfully.*] Yes'm. Six pence. [*The RESPECTABLE WOMAN, who is pale, tired, and weary, hands JIM a coin and he closes the shutter.*] Here's a lidy wants a room.

MRS HARRIS. Aw right. Comin'. [*She waddles out hurriedly.*]

When MRS HARRIS has left the room a hush falls over the others and one can discern a certain sheepishness in the manner of JIM and CURLY TOM. The latter, after a moment's pause, goes over to a corner of the room and sits down on the floor, carefully adjusting his trousers as he does so. He then takes an apple from his trousers' pocket and proceeds to pare it with the blade

of a handleless knife, removing the many rotten parts and throwing them unceremoniously on the floor. He then eats it slowly and with relish, paying little or no heed to the conversation which ensues.

JIM. [going over to Liz, who has been standing motionless hitherto, and speaking in a voice which he makes as soft as possible.] There's a chair if you'd like ter sit dahn.

LIZ. Thank yer. [*She sits down.*]

JIM looks down at her fixedly, admiration warring with pity. He moves nearer to her.

JIM. You look tired. Bin walkin' far?

LIZ. Good way—from Deptford—dahm by the river, yer know. . . .

JIM. That's a good way.

LIZ. Yers.

JIM. Wot made yer come over 'ere?

LIZ. [*hesitating.*] I dunno. Wantid ter get away from that neighb'r'ood.

JIM. Don't yer like it then?

LIZ. [*vehemently.*] I 'ate it!

JIM. I know someb'dy lives there.

LIZ. [*listlessly.*] Oh? Lots do.

JIM. Yus—'e don't like it neither.

LIZ. Nobody do—really. (*slight pause.*)

JIM. Wot's yer name?

LIZ. [*hesitating.*] They call me Liz : Elizabeth's me real name, Elizabeth Ellen.

JIM. Good name, Liz. Liz wot ?

LIZ. It don't matter wot.

JIM. [*tactfully.*] Rather not say ?

LIZ. Yers. . . .

JIM. [*sitting down near her.*] Yer not married, are yer ?

LIZ. [*in a low voice.*] Yers.

JIM. Ole man left yer ?

LIZ. [*fiercely.*] No. Me left 'im.

JIM. Ol ! Knock yer abaht ?

LIZ. Yers.

JIM. [*grimly, between his teeth.*] Damn rotter. . . . W're's 'e nah ?

LIZ. Don't know. I left 'im this mornin' an' don't never want ter see 'im ag'in, not if I 'ave ter starve first. . . . I wouldn't 'a' mindid so much 'im knockin' me abaht—they all do that——

JIM. [*half-heartedly.*] Not all.

LIZ. Nearly all. 'T any rate 'e did me, but that wasn't the worst : 'e used ter treat me uncommon bad, stoppin' aht all night an' then comin' 'ome dead drunk—an' accusin' me . . . o' doin' wot I'd no business ter do.

JIM. Wot was 'is name ?

LIZ. I don't care ter say.

JIM. 'Cawse, yer can do as yer like—'t ain't none o' my business. . . .

LIZ. I don't like peachin'.

JIM. 'Cawse not.

LIZ. But you seem ter be a decent sort o' chap . . . 'is name was Bill, Bill 'Iggins. [JIM starts back.]

JIM. Go on? Law' love a duck!

LIZ. [*frightened*.] D'yer know 'im then?

MRS HARRIS *enters and regards them suspiciously*.

JIM. Know 'im, yus; I sh'd rather think I do.

He turns round and stares at MRS HARRIS defiantly.

This young party [*cocking his finger towards LIZ*] 'pears ter know old . . . [LIZ *looks at him imploringly*] . . . you know, old Daddy Breakin'-fast.

LIZ'S *terrified expression gives way to one of relief*.

MRS HARRIS. [*suspiciously*.] Well, wot abaht it? Nothink strange abaht that, is there? Ev'rybody, abaht 'ere knows ole Daddy Breakin'fast, don't they?

JIM. [*on the defensive*.] Awright, keep yer

'air on: 'oo said there was anythink strange abaht it, eh?

MRS HARRIS. [*increasingly suspicious.*] You seem ter be mighty interested in the young woman's acquaintancis.

JIM. Wot the 'ell's that ter do wiv you?

MRS HARRIS. [*to LIZ.*] 'Ere, you, keep yer-self to yerself, if *you* please.

LIZ. [*shrinking.*] I ain't bin doin' no 'arm.

MRS HARRIS. [*warningly.*] Then don't. This ain't a residential 'otel: it's a lodgin' 'ahse, w're people keeps theirselves *to* theirselves, so don't you fergit it. [*She turns scowlingly away.*]

JIM. [*rising.*] Stow it, mother: the gal wasn't doin' no 'arm.

MRS HARRIS. [*turning on him sharply.*] That's my business. If she don't like it she can clear aht.

LIZ. [*making for the door.*] P'raps I'd better—ter save unpleasantness.

JIM. [*authoritatively.*] No yer don't; yer stay 'ere. [*To MRS HARRIS.*] If you think yo're gain' ter treat me like a bloomin' kid yo're mistaken. Look 'ere, miss; you stays 'ere, because *I* says so.

LIZ. [*piteously.*] Really I'd rather go if I'm

gain' ter cause any unpleasantness. [*She walks towards the door.*]

MRS HARRIS. [*fiercely.*] Yus, git aht of it !

JIM. [*violently.*] Shut yer rah !

A knock at the shutter.

MRS HARRIS. [*distracted from the trouble.*]
The rain's adrivin' of 'em in. [*She nods at JIM.*]
Jest see 'oo it is.

JIM goes over to the shutter and draws it back and confronts BILL HIGGINS. He endeavours to keep the latter's eyes away from the contents of the room.

JIM. [*greeting the newcomer heartily.*] Hullo, Bill, me ole pal ; 'ah goes it nah ? Come rahnd, me ole sport.

He bangs the shutter to in some agitation and hurries over to LIZ, who seems to be almost turned to stone by a fleeting glimpse of BILL'S visage.

JIM. [*whispering excitedly to LIZ.*] It's 'im.

MRS HARRIS. [*thrusting her head forward.*]
'Oo ?

JIM. [*brutally.*] Mindyer own business.

MRS HARRIS. [*exasperated.*] Is that there strumpet ter come before yer own mother ?

JIM. [*threatening.*] Shut up, carn't yer.
[*To LIZ.*] 'Ere, come in 'ere ole gal : I'll try an'

git 'im away. [*He pushes her with gentle force towards the bedroom door, LIZ hardly protesting.*]

LIZ. No, I'd better face it and 'ave it aht.

There is an impatient knock on the locked door.

JIM. Aw right, I'm acomin'.

MRS HARRIS. [*With increased exasperation.*]
'Oo is it? If you won't open the door, I will.

She makes a bee-line for the door. JIM takes hold of her arm and swings her round into the middle of the room.

JIM. Git aht of it, carn't yer?

MRS HARRIS *stares at him in stupefaction.*
[*To LIZ.*] Nah, then, in 'ere or not? I tell yer I'll see yer aht o' the mess.

LIZ. [*with a resisting sigh.*] Oh, aw right then.

LIZ allows JIM to usher her into the bedroom; he then turns the key in the lock.

MRS HARRIS. [*bewildered.*] Wot are yer ashov-in' of 'er in there for?

JIM. [*fixing his eyes on her until she withdraws hers.*] Mind yer own business.

He crosses over and opens the door for BILL HIGGINS, who enters with a look of annoyed surprise.

BILL is a slight figure of a man, rather better

dressed than JIM ; he wears a " dicky " but no collar ; a bright silk handkerchief, tied with an eye to effect, adorns his neck. He looks about thirty years of age, perhaps somewhat younger. He has a small face, rather well-formed, with a small fair moustache, well brushed fair hair, weak grey eyes, full lips and a weak chin. As a rule he walks slowly ; he is not very alert. He feels more than he thinks, and the space between his eyes is generally puckered.

BILL. Wot's the game ? [*He saunters up the room with his hands in his pockets.*]

JIM. [*shortly.*] 'Ad to attend ter someb'dy jest come in.

BILL. Ow ! [*He turns and regards MRS HARRIS with a bored expression.*] Allow, Mrs 'Arris : ain't see you fer a long time. 'Ow's things ?

MRS HARRIS. [*wiping a dirty hand on a dirtier apron and then extending it to him.*] Middlin'. 'Ah's yerself ?

BILL. [*gloomily.*] Bally rotten.

MRS HARRIS. Yer don't say so ; 'ah's that ?

BILL. [*not over-inclined to expand.*] I dunno.

A short silence ensues ; JIM does not move far from the door. They all regard each other with an air of questioning.

[*Sarcastically.*] Will I sit dahn? Yes, certainly. [*He helps himself to a chair at the table, and continues sarcastically.*] Thank yer kindly.

JIM. [*staring fixedly at BILL for a time.*] Come an' 'ave a drink.

MRS HARRIS. 'E don't want no drink.

BILL. [*with sudden gloom.*] Drink? No, cuss it!

MRS HARRIS. Wot, turned teetot'ler all of a sudden?

JIM. [*with affected gusto.*] I don't think. [*He puts his hand on BILL'S shoulder.*] Come along, cocky; come an' 'ave a wet.

MRS HARRIS. [*with an ugly guffaw.*] Love a duck, 'e'll get a wettin' 'e don't barg'in for if 'e goes aht in this rain. 'Ark at it!

JIM. [*with a snarl.*] Funny, ain't yer?

BILL. [*contemplatively.*] No, Jim, ole man: I'm orf the drink fer a bit.

JIM. [*impatiently.*] Don't try ter kid me.

BILL. [*solemnly.*] It's Gawd's struth.

MRS HARRIS. [*inquisitively.*] An' 'ah's that?

BILL. [*to JIM, indicating MRS HARRIS with a jerk of the thumb.*] Don't she know?

MRS HARRIS. [*interposing.*] Know wot?

BILL. Me ole woman's bin an' gawn an' bunked.

MRS HARRIS. Yer don't say so ?

BILL. Yus. Me ways didn't please er 'ighness an' so she 's skedaddled—'opped it.

MRS HARRIS. [*consequently.*] Some women do take it cool, blowed if they don't. My ole man would 'a' give me a bash in the jaw if I'd'a' tried that game on.

JIM. [*disrespectfully.*] Oh, you ! I can understand you arilin' anybody. But 'er . . . [*stops short.*]

BILL. [*suspiciously.*] D'you know my ole woman then ?

JIM. [*in some confusion.*] On'y by wot you've tole me.

MRS HARRIS. [*suspiciously.*] Wot's she like, Bill 'Iggins ?

BILL. Wotcher wanter know for ?

MRS HARRIS. I dunno ; I might 'a' seen 'er, that's all. We sees all sorts 'ere yer know.

JIM. [*glaring at her.*] Garn, you ain't seen 'er. . . .

MRS HARRIS. [*tartly.*] 'ahd' yer know ?

BILL. Well, she's a good-lookin' young woman, rather short, not staht, ner yet thin. . . .

MRS HARRIS. [*conclusively.*] Wot colour 'air ?

BILL. Jolly funny colour, give yer *my* word. A sort of reddy-brahn—'twixt an' between like.

MRS HARRIS. [*jumping up excitedly.*] Thought as much ! That there young . . .

JIM *leaps to his feet and a dangerous glitter appears in his eyes ; he raises his fist as if to strike* MRS HARRIS, *who sinks back into her chair, cowed.*

JIM. [*with intense feeling.*] If yer don't 'old yer blasted tongue I'll split yer 'ead fer yer. . . .

MRS HARRIS. [*startled.*] Gawd lummy ! Wo't 'ave I done ter yer ?

BILL. [*also alarmed.*] Wot's up, Jim ?

JIM. [*walking away sullenly.*] Never you mind. [*He grabs hold of BILL'S arm and pulls him away.*] 'Ere, come aht o' this or else there'll be trouble.

BILL. [*suspiciously, to MRS HARRIS.*] 'Ere, I say, 'ave yer seen my ole woman or 'ave yer not. I wantter know.

JIM *drops BILL'S arm and looks threateningly at* MRS HARRIS.

MRS HARRIS. [*sulkily, to BILL.*] I tell yer she's . . . [*She suddenly stops, as JIM again threatens her.*] Strike me lucky, wot's come over yer ?

JIM. [*to BILL.*] Come aht o' this, I tell yer.

He pulls BILL towards the door, BILL resisting.

BILL. No, 't ain't likely. I'm again' ter see this through.

JIM. [*desperately.*] And I say yer gain' ter clear aht.

MRS HARRIS. [*to BILL.*] Look 'ere, Bill 'Iggins, if you keep 'im away from me, p'raps I can show yer somethink yer wantter see.

JIM. Wot's yo'r game ?

MRS HARRIS. [*Going towards the bedroom door.*] Never you mind.

JIM releases BILL'S arm and precedes MRS HARRIS to the door, taking up his position in front of it.

JIM. Try it on, try it on !

BILL. [*bewildered.*] Wot's all this mean ? Is my ole woman in that there room and you attryin' ter keep 'er from me ?

MRS HARRIS. I don't go so fur as ter say that, but I 'ave me suspicions.

BILL. [*to JIM insinuatingly.*] Wot's the matter, Jim 'Arris ?

JIM surveys him coolly and contemptuously, but remains silent.

Ain't yer gain' to answer ?

JIM. [*curtly.*] No.

BILL. [*going forward.*] Damn yer ; git aht uv it ! [*He rushes at JIM, who hurls him to the*

ground. BILL *struggles to his feet, not cowed.*] I'll 'ave the Law on ter yer.

MRS HARRIS. [*determinedly, to JIM.*] Look 'ere, me boy : don't yer think yer again' ter play any o' them there tricks wi' me, 'cause yo'r not. If yer don't git aht o' the way o' that there dore, I'll give yer away, as sure as I'm a livin' woman I'll give yer 'way.

JIM. Do wot yer bally well like, but if yer come pokin' yer nose rahnd 'ere I'll twist yer neck fer yer. [*This remark is addressed to MRS HARRIS and BILL indifferently.*]

There is a timid knock at the bedroom door.
[*Surlily, to LIZ off.*] Well ?

LIZ. [*from within.*] It ain't no good ; lemme aht ; he's bahnd ter git 'old o' me sooner or later.

JIM. [*severely.*] 'Old yer rah !

BILL. So it *is* my ole woman. Nah we know w'ere we are. [*He poses the problem.*] 'Ere's a man tryin' ter keep lawful wedded couples apart. Oh, we'll see abaht that. [*He makes for the door.*] Oh ! it's a pritty fine thing w'en a man carn't do wot 'e likes with 'is own wife ! We'll soon see !

He grasps the handle of the main door, and, finding it locked, turns round with a savage gesture of bafflement.

W'ere's the key o' this 'ere dore ?

MRS HARRIS. [*helplessly.*] 'E's got it.

BILL. [*with fierce recognition of his impotence.*] Damn 'im.

LIZ. [*piteously.*] Let me come aht !

JIM. [*to LIZ, peremptorily.*] 'Old yer rah !

LIZ. [*off, imploringly.*] I'd rather, reely.

JIM. [*turns impatiently and opens the door violently, changing his position to enable LIZ to emerge.*] Nah, yer've got yer own way.

LIZ *stands still, just inside the room, and regards BILL with fear.*

BILL. [*with bitter sarcasm.*] Oh, so that's w'y yer lef' me, is it ?

LIZ. [*tremulously.*] Wot yer mean, Bill ?

BILL. [*sarcastically.*] Mean ? Nah, I wonder wot I can mean. Hextre-ordinary, ain't it ? D'you 'appen ter know wot I mean, Mrs 'Arris ?

MRS HARRIS. [*with a fat chuckle.*] Well, I 'ave me suspicions.

BILL. [*in the same tone.*] Er cawse you mean ter stand me aht thet y've never set eyes on this gent—[*he pauses and adds deferentially*]—this gent afore. Er cawse yer do. [*His tone changes suddenly to one of anger.*] Well, it won't wash !

LIZ. [*to JIM.*] Wot's 'e mean ?

JIM. [*bluntly.*] 'E means as 'ow you've bin acarryin' on wi' me.

LIZ. [*shrinking.*] It ain't true, reely it ain't, Bill; true as I stand 'ere.

BILL. You carn't kid me; you ain't no better'n you oughter be and I alwus knoo it.

JIM. [*interrupting LIZ, who was about to speak.*] Don't answer 'im. It's on'y 'is dirty soul oozin' aht of 'is dirty mouth. If 'e wasn't a dirty mean cad 'e wouldn't accuse yer. [*BILL strides over to him.*] And you know it. And wot's more, I've 'ad abaht enough o' this 'ere twaddle. Let's git ter business. Er you gain' ter treat this gal fair an' square?

BILL. [*thrusting his head forward.*] Wot the 'ell's that got ter do wiv you?

JIM. [*ignoring him.*] 'Cawse if you ain't, she's not goin' back ter yer, an' that's all abaht it.

He strolls away from BILL, affecting indifference.

BILL. [*exasperated.*] Is she my ole woman, or is she not?

JIM. [*calmly.*] That ain't nothink ter do with it. We're gain' to 'ave *my* law for a change. [*He comes forward, propitiating but determined.*] If you take yer dyin' solemn oath that you'll

do wot's right by 'er, I won't 'ave no more ter say in the matter.

MRS HARRIS. [*getting in a word.*] And ain't the gal gain' to 'ave no say in the matter at all?

JIM. No, she ain't. The gal's that soft she'd put 'erself under 'is thumb as soon as look at 'im if I'd let 'er.

MRS HARRIS. [*contemptuously.*] Yo're mad—like yer father; you got a tile orf. An' w'y, if it ain't rude to arsk, d'you take a sudden int'rest in the lidy?

JIM. Becawse it pleases me.

BILL. [*almost hysterically.*] An' it pleases me to 'ave me own wife, and I'll jolly well 'ave 'er too.—Liz, come 'ere. [*She shrinks. He thunders.*] Come 'ere! [*She looks up at JIM, as if for permission; he evades her glance. She moves hesitatingly towards BILL, who advances to meet her, making a grab at her sleeve. JIM steps between them.*]

JIM. 'Ands orf. [*He pushes BILL away, and then keeping his eyes fixed on him crosses over to the door and unlocks it, the others in the room following him with their eyes as if fascinated.*] Nah then; the dore's open. Gimme yer promise and I'll say no more.

BILL. I'll see you damned first.

JIM. [*calmly.*] Then you'll see me damned first. [*To LIZ.*] 'Ere, clear aht o' this. [*He stands between LIZ and BILL. LIZ moves timidly towards him.*] Hurry up! [*BILL makes a dash at LIZ, who, frightened, rushes from him through the open door. BILL rushes to the door, but JIM bangs it to in time to prevent him escaping. JIM stands with his back to the door, spreading out his arms cross-wise.*] Nah then!

There is a moment's flurried pause and then BILL rushes violently at JIM, with the intention of kicking him. JIM grabs him by the foot and pushes him back. BILL sprawls over the floor, much to the amusement of CURLY TOM, and a few seconds pass before he is able to regain his feet. When he is up he looks round with an angry scowl and addresses CURLY TOM.

BILL. Cahd! [*coward!*] See a man kep' away from 'is own wife an' insulted by a lahsy rotter like 'im and don't orfer a 'elpin' 'and!

CURLY TOM. [*looking up from his apple with the utmost indifference.*] This ain't my affair. I ain't again' ter interfere wiv things wot don't concern me. 'Sides, I wouldn't raise me 'and to 'elp you. [*He throws the core of his apple on*

to the floor and contemplates the scene with the quizzical glance of a connoisseur.]

BILL. [*regarding him with infinite contempt, and then addressing JIM.*] Nah then, Jim 'Arris, are you gain' ter let me aht of 'ere or are yer gain' ter take the consequences ?

JIM. [*remaining in the same position, and speaking in a dull, heavy tone.*] I'm ready ter take wotever consequences there may be.

BILL. [*still showing his sense of his weakness.*] I tell yer straight, I ain't again' ter stand no muckin' abaht. If yer don't let me aht nah, you've got ter let me aht later ; and then we'll see w'ether a man ain't got no right to 'is own wife or not.

JIM. [*calmly.*] I'm givin' yer wife time ter git away ; if she don't want ter git away, you'll find 'er ahtside w'en yer git there ; if she do, then " Good luck to 'er," says I. So nah yer know.

CURLY TOM. [*chirruping.*] An' so say all of us !

JIM. [*to BILL.*] It ain't no good o' you standin' there like that : I ain't again' ter budge from this 'ere door for a nour, so yer can do wot yer like. If yer take my advice you'll go and sit dahn and make yerself comfortable.

BILL. [*after a pause.*] You wait till I git you aht !

He slouches back and goes over to the window, staring moodily into the street, his hands forced deep into his trousers' pockets.

MRS HARRIS rises, stares at JIM, shakes herself, and decides that interference is useless ; she sits down.

MRS HARRIS. Well, I never 'eard o' sech a thing.

CURLY TOM moves backward to the wall, without rising, and yawns.

JIM lets his arms drop to his sides, but remains with his back to the door. There is a short brooding silence.

SCENE II

About midnight. The curtains have been drawn together and the blind lowered. The caged gas is alight, but the flame is faint and flickering.

JIM is seated at one of the tables ; his right arm rests on the table and supports his head : he is dozing. After a few minutes of silence a slow footstep is heard outside, followed by a light tap at the shutter. JIM does not hear and the knock is repeated. He raises his

head sleepily and rises wearily ; with dragging footsteps he goes to the shutter and draws it aside. LIZ stands outside.

JIM. [*surprised.*] You back again ?

LIZ. Yers.

JIM. Woffor ?

LIZ. Lemme come in.

JIM gives a hasty glance around the room, closes the shutter, and opens the door. He puts his finger to his lips to command silence.

LIZ enters slowly and looks about the room with a half-scared glance. She is white and her clothes are damp. She peers into the darkness. JIM locks the door and then follows her into the room.

LIZ. W'ere's ev'rybody ?

JIM. Abed. [*warningly.*] Don't make a rah ; we don't want ter wake anybody up. Ain't many 'ere ternight as it 'appens. . . . since the rain give over : I 'spose they're sleepin' aht. Phew ! ain't it 'ot ?

LIZ. W'ere's 'e ?

JIM. [*feigning not to understand.*] 'Oo ?

LIZ. My ole man ?

JIM. [*making light of the matter.*] Oh, 'm. he's gorne.

LIZ. Gorne w'ere ?

JIM. Gawd knows : I don't.

LIZ. Wot 'appened w'en I left ?

JIM. Well, I give you time ter sling yer 'ook and then I let 'im aht. . . . Ain't yer gain' ter 'sit dahn ?

He crosses over to a chair near the table and pulls one into position for her. She sits down lethargically and he sits down on the other side of the same table.

Carn't make aht wot you've come back for.

LIZ. 'Ardly know meself. [*In a louder voice.*] Wot was I ter do ? Pouring 'eavens 'ard, now're ter go unless I went 'ome. [*She rises and moves away from the table.*] And I felt as though I couldn't go 'ome any more. [*She drops heavily into the chair again, and concludes hopelessly.*] So I come back 'ere.

JIM. But 'e might 'a' still bin 'ere.

LIZ. I thought o' that—risked it. I didn't care. After all, if I did 'ave ter go back wiv 'im, it ud be better'n the streets.

JIM. You know best.

LIZ. [*quickly.*] Wot d'yer take me for then ?

JIM. Oh, nothink. . . . But ain't yer got-n'y relations you could go to ?

LIZ. No, on'y 'is relations. An' they wouldn't

think no wrong of 'im : it 'ud be all my fault.
Well, p'r'aps I'd better get orf. [*She rises.*]

JIM. [*also rising and forcing her back into her seat.*] Wot's the good o' you goin' nah ? It's nearly twelve o'clock. May's well stop 'ere nah until the mornin'.

LIZ. Wot, 'ere ? Wot'll they say ?

JIM. [*asserting himself.*] Let 'em say wot they bally well like.

LIZ. [*after a pause.*] 'Ah abaht your missis ?

JIM. Ain't got no missis.

LIZ. [*a gleam of pleasure crossing her face.*]
Oh !

JIM. Wot if I 'ad ? I'm a man, ain't I ?
Got me rights, ain't I ?

LIZ. [*surprised at his vehemence.*] Yers, 'spose so ; but she mightn't like it. Me an' you . . . 'ere . . . tergether alone. . . .

JIM. [*light dawning.*] Oh. [*His hand falls across the table and accidentally touches her arm.*]
Lummy ! ain't your coat wet ! [*She feels it.*]
Better take it orf and 'ang it over a chair till the mornin'.

LIZ. [*indifferently.*] It don't matter.

JIM. [*masterfully.*] Yus it do matter.

*He goes over to help her off with the coat.
She rises and submits. As they get closer*

together a look of something like triumph momentarily crosses LIZ'S face. JIM gazes at her sheepishly and returns backwards to his chair, not removing his eyes from her face.

'Ah long you bin married ?

LIZ. Nigh two years.

JIM. Got 'ny littl'uns ?

LIZ. [*shortly.*] No.

JIM. Didn't yer know abaht 'im before yer took on with 'im ?

LIZ. [*reluctantly.*] Yers, partly, but . . .

JIM. Wot yer marry 'im for then ?

LIZ. Well, you know.

JIM. Wot ?

LIZ. You know wot it is. I thought w'en we was married 'e'd change. 'E promised over an' over again 'e'd turn over a noo leaf. Of course 'e never did. Leastways, fer a few munts 'e was awright ; then 'e started again.

JIM. I 'spose you liked 'im orlright ?

LIZ. [*reluctantly.*] Oh, yers — orlright — then . . .

JIM. But nah ?

LIZ. You carn't go on fer ever likin' a man wot treats yer like 'e do me. I wouldn't mind the drink ser much ; but 'e says sech rotten things . . . you 'eard 'im yerself.

JIM. [*under his breath.*] Swine! Wot'll 'e do nah, d'yer think?

LIZ. Gawd on'y knows. Very likely carry on with someb'dy else.

JIM. Think so?—'Spouse 'e'd 'a' bin 'ere w'en you come back, wot would you 'a' done?

LIZ. [*thinking before replying.*] 'Spouse I would 'a' give way to 'im. [*In desperation.*] Wot else could I 'a' done?

JIM. I might 'a' bin able ter keep 'im away. Couldn't you get a divorce?

LIZ. Blimy, it ud cawst fifty pun if it cawst a penny. Besides, 'ah 'm I ter prove anythink?

JIM. [*baffled.*] Carn't yer git a seperation?

LIZ. [*impatiently.*] Ol, I dunno: I ain't tried and don't know 'ah ter try. An' if I did, 'ah do I know 'e'd be bahnd ter keep me?

JIM. Couldn't yer work?

LIZ. 'Spouse so.

JIM. Wot could yer do?

LIZ. Sell flahrs; go aht charrin' I 'spouse. [*She rises, petulantly.*] Oh, I'd better git orf. I ain't wantid 'ere!

JIM. [*not attempting to stop her.*] Wot'll you do?

LIZ. [*taking her coat from the chair.*] I dunno.

JIM. Goin' back to 'im?

LIZ. [*fiercely.*] Dunno.

JIM. D'you want ter go? [*She does not answer; she is sulky.*] [*Shouting at her.*] D'yer want ter go?

LIZ. [*struggling with her coat and speaking petulantly.*] I ain't wantid 'ere; don't yer think I can see that?

JIM. [*turning away from her with affected indifference.*] 'Ave yer own way.

LIZ. Wot yer mean?

JIM. [*nonchalantly.*] Ol, nuffink.

LIZ. [*making for the door.*] Very well then.

JIM does not shift his position. With her hand on the door-handle she turns round to him and confronts him archly. He shuffles his feet and turns his eyes away; she regards him unflinchingly and speaks steadily.

You got a gal?

JIM. No.

LIZ. [*satisfied.*] Oh. [*She tries the handle of the door.*] This dore's locked.

JIM. Yers.

A blank pause. Presently he takes the key from his pocket and goes over to the door. He unlocks it. She puts her hand out to grasp the handle; he does the same and their

hands meet. She starts back : he grabs her by the waist and roughly kisses her on the lips.

LIZ. [*struggling from him and wiping her mouth on the back of her hand.*] Silly fool you !

JIM. [*vehemently, with intense passion.*] I like you. . . .

LIZ. [*nervously.*] Chuck it !

JIM. I tell yer I like yer, an' I'm not again' ter let yer go back ter that blasted Bill 'Iggins, so nah then !

LIZ. [*nervously.*] Don't play the fool. D'yer fergit I'm married ?

JIM. No, t'aint likely. I don't fergit, ain't likely ter fergit. Don't you fergit that you've come 'ere in the middle o' the night and thrown yerself in my 'ands. Nah you'll 'ave ter take the consequences. You don't go back to 'im, d'y'ear ? You do wot I tell yer.

LIZ. Law lummy, you're enough ter frighten anybody.

JIM. May be I am. Take orf that coat.

LIZ. Woffor ?

JIM. [*gruffly masterful.*] 'Cause I tells yer to. [*They gradually approach the middle of the room. She removes the coat.*] Sit dahn ag'in.

LIZ. [*resentfully.*] Sha'n't.

JIM. [*masterfully.*] Yus you will.

LIZ. [*protestingly.*] Awright then. [*She sits down ; JIM takes a chair and sits near her.*]

There is a brief pause. They regard each other closely, without a tremor on either side. A heavy gloom overspreads JIM's features. Presently he looks down at his feet, and LIZ's eyes, thus released, also scan the floor. A moment elapses and then JIM looks up again ; his glance encounters that of LIZ and both of them turn uneasily away.

JIM. [*seizing her hand.*] D'yer like me ?

LIZ. [*without hesitation.*] In wot way ?

JIM. You know wot way. Would yer marry me ?

LIZ. Garn, you know I carn't.

JIM. [*impatiently.*] Gawd ! Don't I know that ? Would yer if yer could ?

LIZ. [*listlessly.*] I dessay.

JIM. I 'spose you 'ad plenty o' young men w'en you was single ?

LIZ. A goodish few. . . . And you ain't got a gal, eh ?

JIM. No : never liked gals some'ah. Shifty lot : never mean wot they say an' never says wot they mean. Think you ought to alwus be a-spoonin' abaht with 'em.

LIZ. Theyn't all like that though.

JIM. [*facetiously.*] Oh ain't they though, I don't fink !

LIZ. [*confidingly.*] I ain't like that meself.

JIM. [*not having thought of her as a "gal."*] Oh you !

LIZ. Well, after all, gals will go after decent-lookin' fellers, jest as fellers will go after decent-lookin' gals : it's on'y nach'ral.

JIM. [*frankly.*] I ain't wot you'd call decent-lookin', am I ?

LIZ. [*confused.*] Wot a question !

JIM. [*persistently.*] But really, am I ?

LIZ. [*unwillingly.*] Well, you ain't bad, as men go !

JIM. [*pleased.*] Never thought of that before.

He gets up and walks about the room a moment or two ; holds himself erect and pulls up his trousers, which are supported by a belt.

LIZ. Garn ! [*Reflectively.*] But some men don't. Gals alwus knows w'ether they're good-lookin' or not, give yer my word.

JIM. [*bending over her.*] You're a beauty, yer know. [*He straightens himself up.*] I got a bit a money saved up. . . . I'm tired o' this rotten 'ole. . . .

LIZ. [*drily.*] Wot yer torkin' abaht ?

JIM. You and me seem to 'it it awright.

LIZ. Wot yer mean ?

JIM. [*he leans over her chair and lets his right arm fall on hers.*] Couldn't we keep 'ahse tergether somew'ere, you and me ?

LIZ. [*intently.*] Wot's that yo're sayin' ?

She remains perfectly motionless, staring in front of her.

JIM. [*earnestly.*] I like you. . . . I believe you like me awright. I'd treat yer well, straight I would ; I'd work me fingers ter the bone ter make yer 'appy, 'struth I would. . . . Wot yer say ?

LIZ. [*in a low voice.*] An' me a respectable woman ?

JIM. [*raising his hand from her arm and putting it on her shoulder as he holds himself more upright.*] You'd be a jolly sight more respectable then. . . . You married to a rotter like 'im, not fit ter black yer boots . . . drunk . . . p'raps worse. Wot d'yer owe 'im ? Nothink ! Wouldn't it be more respectable to live yer life with someb'dy that would appreciate yer ? [*He waits for her reply, but she continues to look steadily before her.*] I promise yer I won't stay aht late o' nights. I don't drink—nothink ter speak of. I 'ate other gals . . . it's on'y you. . . . Eh ?

LIZ. [*with forced mockery.*] Yers, and w'en you git tired o' me, wot then ?

JIM. [*passionately.*] I wouldn't git tired o' yer : I ain't that sort.

LIZ. And me married too ?

JIM. I don't call it married. [*He bends over her again, and speaks with great tenderness.*] I tell yer I like yer . . . [*then with a tremendous effort*] love yer.

LIZ. [*fearfully.*] An' us not married. W'en you'd 'ad anough o' me, you'd simply go aht one night and never come back no more. I'd 'ave no claim on yer, mind.

JIM. [*dropping on his knees by the side of her chair and speaking up into her face.*] Liz, yer don't know me, straight yer don't. I'd go through fire an' water fer yer, I feel that strong abaht yer.

LIZ. [*struggling to resist.*] We ain't known each other more'n a few hahrs.

JIM. Don't matter ; I feel as tho' I'd known yer all me life. Liz, I take me solemn dyin' oath [*he draws his hand symbolically across his throat*], and may I never stir from 'ere if I'm a-kiddin' yer, I'll treat yer well. I'll do ev'ry-think yer want me to.

LIZ. [*fearing to yield.*] But 'ow'd we git

away from 'im ? 'E'd track me dahn ; 'e's got the law on 'is side, don't fergit.

JIM. 'E won't find us. We'll clear aht, far away from 'ere. An' wot if 'e did ? 'E could on'y git a divorce. We wouldn't mind that.

LIZ. [*fearfully.*] But 'e likes me, Jim. 'E wouldn't be satisfied with no divorce, not 'im.

JIM. [*confidently.*] Wot 'ud 'e do then ?

LIZ. Gawd knows wot 'e'd do, 'e's that spiteful.

JIM. [*laughing.*] If that's all you're thinkin' of, you can set yer mind at rest. I'm a match fer Bill 'Iggins any day and a dozen like 'im. 'E ain't got no more guts than a bundle o' lights. . . . Nah then, make up yer mind. . . . We couldn't 'ave a better chance than we got nah.

LIZ. [*reluctantly.*] Awright then.

At the sign of yielding he stoops down and kisses her. She struggles. He releases her and holds his fingers to his lips.

JIM. Sh ! You'll 'ave somebody dahn if you ain't careful.

She is scared but says nothing. She arranges her clothes preparatory to leaving.

Got'n'y money on yer ?

LIZ. [*scornfully.*] Is it likely ? 'Tain't likely that I should 'a' come 'ere if I 'ad, is it ?

JIM. [*feeling in his pocket.*] 'Ere's a tanner ; nex' door but two there's another doss-'ahse—a better one than this ; you can get a decent shake-dahn there fer a tanner. [*He hands her the money ; she takes it.*] Meet me termorrer, ten o'clock, corner o' Wa'wuf road, Elephant-an-Carstle end ; then we can arrange things.

LIZ. [*beginning to repent her decision.*]
Jim . . .

JIM. [*apprehensively.*] Wot's the matter nah ?

LIZ. I s'pose it's awright ?

JIM. [*reassuringly.*] O' course it's awright.

LIZ. [*hesitating.*] On'y . . . me married an all. . . .

JIM. [*tenderly.*] Don't you worry yer 'ead abaht that. Trust me. I'm straight : I ain't one ter speak abaht meself, but some'ah you seem to 'a' give me the gift o' the gab and I feel as though I could go on tawkin' fer ye'rs and ye'rs jest ter say 'ah much I like yer. Take my word fer it. [*He takes hold of her shoulders and looks straight into her eyes.*] I tell yer I'm again' ter make yer 'appy ; I'm gain' ter make yer fergit that other cuss. . . .

LIZ. [*wrenching herself free.*] Nah then ! You shut up abaht 'im ; 'e's my husban' w'en all's said an' done. I liked 'im once. . . .

JIM. [*propitiating.*] Awright, awright.

LIZ. Oh, it's all very well fer you ; but me . . . me married . . . 'tain't the same thing. . . .

JIM. You ain't a-tryin' ter back aht of it nah, are yer ?

LIZ. 'Oo's a-backin' aht of it ?

JIM. [*with renewed tenderness.*] 'Ere, I say, Liz, give a chap a chance : you ain't got nothink ter fear. I'll look after yer. Nah then. Ter-morrer ; ten o'clock ; Wa'wuf road ; Elephant-an-Carstle end.

He opens the door for her ; she goes out without making any rejoinder, her departing figure showing indecision in every line.

Goo'bye fer the present, Liz.

LIZ. [*as she turns the corner, not looking round.*]
Goo'bye !

JIM stands motionless ; there is the sound of a swing door off ; then JIM turns round. The sound of a distant gate. He closes the door, locking it and putting the key in his pocket. He lowers the gas ; walks about restlessly for a few seconds ; listens intently ; rubs his eyes sleepily. Presently he returns to the table, props his head up with his forearm. He sleeps.

SCENE III

The kitchen of LIZ HIGGINS' apartments in Deptford, about half an hour later. Entering the room from the ill-lit landing, one has on one's left a well-filled dresser and a door leading to the bedroom. The fireplace, also on the left, has been energetically polished and gleams in response to the light of the lamp standing exactly in the centre of the table, which, in its turn, stands in the precise centre of the room. Over the mantelpiece, which boasts a ball-fringe and a number of ornaments symmetrically arranged, is a gay-coloured print, and in various parts of the room are other pictures, representing good people doing kind things. A few chairs and a sofa in appropriate positions.

MRS HIGGINS comes in, followed by the landlady, MRS LANSDOWNE. MRS HIGGINS is a plump little woman, about sixty years of age and not more than five feet in height. She retains a good complexion, but her hair is nearly white. Although of a cheerful disposition, she, like her son BILL, is inclined to worry over trifles. She wears a dark

skirt and black bodice ; at the present moment she is dressed in her out-door clothes : a black cape, a black bonnet with a red rose in it, the ribbons tied under her chin primly. Black cotton gloves. MRS LANSDOWNE *is a tall woman of perhaps fifty-five ; her hair is mouse colour ; her complexion pale, almost sallow. She is dressed in black, but a white apron bears witness to her industrious nature.*

MRS LANSDOWNE. [*folding her arms.*] Well, mum, I'm sorry, mum, but it ain't my fault.

MRS HIGGINS. [*plaintively.*] 'Cawse it ain't your fault, Mrs Lansdowne : I ain't sayin' it is, am I now ? [*She takes off her bonnet and cape and puts them on the table.*] But there you are ! Something's wrong ; that's a dead cert. I was arsked round 'ere—hinvided, mind yer—ter tea an' all. And wot do I find ? Nob'dy at 'ome. Well, wot's the reason ? that's all I arsk.

MRS LANSDOWNE. Reason, indeed ; that's wot I want ter know. As I told yer, she went aht at eleven o'clock this mornin'. " W'ere you goin', Mrs 'Iggins ? " I says. " On'y ter get some things in," she says ; " me mother-in-law " —meanin' you—" 'is a-comin' ter tea," she says. " Oh ! " I says. " Yers," she says. An' that's

all wot transpired. I did think she looked a bit queer some'ah, but my motter bein' ter keep meself to meself, I says to meself: "It ain't none o' your business, Mary Lansdowne: 'old yer tongue." So 'old me tongue I did.

MRS HIGGINS. I'm sorry you did. [*Hastily.*] Not that you could 'a' guessed.

MRS LANSDOWNE. Guess indeed!

MRS HIGGINS. [*contemplatively.*] An' wot time did 'e come 'ome?

MRS LANSDOWNE. Same as usual, twenty pars' twelve, fer 'is dinner. "Mrs Lansdowne," 'e says: "w'ere's my missis?" Jest like that. "Mr 'Iggins," I says, "'ow do I know?" 'E looked a bit dahn in the mouth, so I said to 'im: "She went aht at eleven o'clock," I says, "and I ain't seen 'er since," I says; "said she was goin' ter do a bit o' shoppin'," I says.

MRS HIGGINS. An' wot did 'e do?

MRS LANSDOWNE. Do? Do? Nothink—not at first. He jest set dahn. 'Arf hour later 'e come dahn stairs ag'in. "Mrs Lansdowne," 'e says, "I'm again' ter find my missis." 'E looked pale-like, and determined, and I wondered w'ether 'e intended ter bash 'er or wot.

MRS HIGGINS. An' between then and now you ain't seen 'im at all?

MRS LANSDOWNE. [*impatiently.*] Ain't I told yer so ?

MRS HIGGINS. Wot's the time nah ? It mus' be gittin' on.

MRS LANSDOWNE. The pubs is jest closin' ; 'ar' pars' twelve.

MRS HIGGINS. Oh, dear : I dunno wot ter do.

She extends her arms helplessly, looking over the table at MRS LANSDOWNE, who regards her impassively.

MRS LANSDOWNE. If you take my advice—not that anybody cver does—but if you take my advice you'd go 'ome

MRS HIGGINS. [*in an outburst.*] 'Ow can I go 'ome and sleep knowin' my boy's in trouble ?

MRS LANSDOWNE. [*resignedly.*] I said I didn't expec' yer ter take my advice ; 'same time, yer needn't carry on so ; your son's big enough ter take care of 'isself—man 'is age ! W'ether or no, I carn't stop up 'ere any longer ; 'ar' pars' twelve an' me not in bed . . . and got ter get up at six o'clock in the mornin'. [MRS HIGGINS *pays no attention to her.*] Would you believe me, Mrs 'Iggins, I've bin up at six o'clock ev'ry morning since I bin married. [*She turns away with a sigh.*] Ah, well. It's an 'ard world fer them as tries ter do their dooty.

Footsteps on the stairs.

MRS HIGGINS. [*expectantly.*] 'Ark!

MRS LANSDOWNE. [*showing some signs of inquisitive animation.*] 'Ere 'e is!

MRS HIGGINS *moves towards the door, showing signs of excitement as the footsteps approach the room. Presently the door opens and BILL enters. He is a trifle the worse for drink, but has apparently almost complete control of himself. He scowls at MRS LANSDOWNE; then his eyes alight on his mother, who goes up to him with outstretched arms.*

MRS HIGGINS. My poor boy.

He does not resist her embrace and seems relieved at being able to give way. MRS HIGGINS motions to MRS LANSDOWNE to leave the stage; the latter feigns not to understand.

MRS HIGGINS. Thank yer kindly, Mrs Lansdowne; we sha'n't trouble you any more tonight.

MRS LANSDOWNE. [*snorting indignantly.*] Oh, indeed! [*She addresses the world at large.*] W'en you can be of some use you're wantid; but you can be done withaht quick anough w'en they think you might 'ear somethink interestin'. [*She bounces out.*]

BILL *drops heavily into an arm-chair, followed by MRS HIGGINS, who pets him. Neither speaks for a moment or two.*

MRS HIGGINS. [*anxiously.*] Well, Bill, 'ave yer seen 'er ?

BILL. Yers.

MRS HIGGINS. [*surprised.*] Oh, you 'ave. W'ere's she now ?

BILL. I dunno.

MRS HIGGINS. [*plaintively.*] Wot's the meanin' of it all, Bill ?

BILL. [*disconsolately.*] Oh, she took offence at me ways, as she calls 'em—and she 'opped it.

MRS HIGGINS. But, Bill, surely you could 'a' brought 'er back.

BILL. [*sullenly.*] No, I couldn't. She managed ter give me the slip an' I ain't set eyes on 'er since.

MRS HIGGINS. [*with conviction.*] The 'ussy !

BILL. Yer needn't take on agin' 'er, mother ; p'raps it was partly my fault, but I didn't think she'd 'op it altergether. . . . You git along 'ome, mother ; 't ain't no good o' you stayin' 'ere.

MRS HIGGINS. P'raps she'll come back.

BILL. P'raps she won't. [*With passion.*] You know 'ow I'm gorne on that gal, mother ; if

she come back now I wouldn't say nothink ; I'd jest let 'er settle dahn as she liked and let the 'ole matter blow over. [*Gloomily.*] But she won't come 'ome, no fear. [*Fiercely.*] If I thought that Jim 'Arris was a-carryin' on with 'er I'd wring 'is blasted neck I would.

MRS HIGGINS. [*surprised.*] Jim 'Arris? You ain't seen 'im, 'ave yer? 'E ain't got nothink ter do with it, 'as 'e?

BILL. I dunno. But she knows 'im. [*He turns his head away to avoid her too-concerned glance.*] Jim 'Arris is awright, but 'e's alwus bin a queer cus—as 'igh an' mighty as they make 'em ; reads books a lot, too.—Queer in 'is 'ead I reckon. But 'ere, you git along 'ome, mother : yo're tired ; leave me ter me own troubles. . . .

MRS HIGGINS. [*hurt.*] Of course if yer'd rather I went, I'll go. [*She puts on her cape and bonnet.*] I don't want ter be in anybody's way. I'll come rahnd in the mornin' and see if there's anythink fresh. [*She crosses over to the door, turning back again before reaching it.*]

BILL. [*regarding her apathetically.*] Awright.

MRS HIGGINS. [*with her hand on the door.*] Thank Gawd you ain't bin an' gone an' done nothink desp'rit. [*She goes back to BILL and pats him affectionately on the head.*] Goo'bye, Bill.

Keep yer pecker up. Gawd bless yer. [*She crosses to the door again, going out with a final*]
Goo'bye.

BILL. [*moodily.*] Goo'bye, mother.

When the door closes BILL'S limbs drop loose and he seems to doze. Suddenly coming to himself, as the street door bangs, he rises, stretches himself, yawns, rubs his eyes, and goes to the table and fetches the lamp. With unsteady limbs he walks into the bedroom, leaving the room in complete darkness.

A minute or two elapse and then a key is heard to fumble in a distant lock; this is followed by the sound of footsteps ascending the stairs. The door opens and the landing light shows the figure of LIZ in the doorway. She comes into the dark room, crosses over to the mantelpiece and feels for matches; finds them and strikes one, going over to the table and looking for the lamp. Not finding it, she looks up in dismay: the match goes out. There ensues a short pause and then a blaze of light proceeds from the bedroom door and BILL comes in with the lamp. On seeing him LIZ shrinks but does not move. BILL seems, for the moment, nonplussed, regarding her incredulously, lamp in trem-

bling hand. He rubs his eyes and doubts his own soberness. He shambles back to the table and puts down the lamp. When he speaks his voice is hoarse.]

BILL. You've come back.

LIZ. [*softly.*] Yers.

BILL. Woffor ?

LIZ. [*motionless.*] I've changed me mind.

BILL *drops heavily on to the sofa.*

LIZ. I'm sorry, Bill.

BILL. [*stupidly, looking straight at her.*]

Woffor ?

LIZ. Fer runnin' away.

BILL. Wot yer do it for then ?

LIZ. You know. . . .

BILL. [*petulantly.*] Don't know.

LIZ. [*almost apologetically.*] You do drink so, Bill. . . .

BILL. [*reluctantly.*] I know.

LIZ. An' w'en you're in drink you 'it me, Bill. . . .

BILL. [*quickly.*] It's a lie !

LIZ. 'Tain't a lie ; you know it ain't. [*She pulls up her sleeve and holds out her arm.*] Look at this. [*He averts his eyes after a hasty glance.*] You don't know wot you are doin' w'en you've bin on the drink.

BILL. [*heavily.*] Gawd 'elp us. [*Struck with an excuse.*] Gawd made the drink. . . .

LIZ. Let bygones be bygones. [*She goes over to him.*] Promise me you'll turn over a noo leaf.

BILL. I promised that before.

LIZ. [*coaxingly.*] Yers, I know; but this time yer'll keep yer word, won't yer, Bill?

BILL. [*gloomily doubtful.*] Yus. 'Cawse there's got ter be give an' take in this 'ere job, yer know.

LIZ. [*not understanding.*] 'Ow, Bill? Wot d'yer mean?

BILL. [*ominously.*] Nothink much. . . . You stick ter me and I'll stick ter you, but none o' yer 'anky-panky, mindjer. . . .

LIZ. I don't know wot yer mean, Bill.

BILL. [*grimly.*] You promise me you'll be straight.

He breaks off suddenly and looks at her fixedly; she shrinks.

LIZ. Straight? Me? Ain't I alwus bin straight with yer, Bill?

BILL. [*doggedly.*] May be you 'ave, maybe you 'aven't: I ain't sayin' nothink; I dunno.

LIZ. Wot d'yer mean, Bill?

BILL. [*standing suddenly erect.*] Wot abaht Jim 'Arris?

LIZ. [*nervously.*] W'y, nothink.

BILL. Oh, "nothink"; I ain't so sure.

LIZ. But it's the truth, Bill.

BILL. Wot'd 'e take on so for?

LIZ. I don't know. It wus the first time I ever set eyes on 'im ternight, straight, Bill.

BILL. I ain't saying it wasn't, am I?—Time enough. . . . Wot 'ad 'e bin a-sayin' ter yer before I come in?

LIZ. Nothink much, Bill.

BILL. But wot?

LIZ. [*confused.*] Oh, 'e arsked me w're I come from, me name and so on; that's all.

BILL. [*menacingly.*] 'E didn't make up ter yer?

LIZ. No, I tell yer.

BILL, *only half-convinced, sits down again.*

LIZ *crosses despondently over the room and falls limply into an arm-chair by the fire-side.*

BILL. Wot yer gorne over there for? [LIZ *does not reply.*] Eh?

LIZ. [*sulkily.*] Wot yer keep arskin' sech questions for? You make me sick, yer do, you an' yer suspicions.

BILL. [*propitiating.*] Law lummy, you *are* all right.

LIZ. [*sulkily.*] Well, I don't like it, so there.

BILL. [*affectionately.*] 'Ere, come an' sit 'ere, ole gal. . . .

LIZ. [*unwilling to give way.*] Don't want to.

BILL. Awright then.

LIZ. If yer gain' ter start yer ole pranks again, I'll begin ter think it ud 'a' bin better if I 'ad 'a' ran away.

BILL, *alarmed, goes to her and bends over her.*

BILL. Don't be silly. You know it wus on'y my larks. I know I can trust yer . . . wouldn't 'a' married yer unless I knew you was straight.

He sits down at her feet. She lets her hand caress his hair.

LIZ. Wot yer want ter say sech things for then ?

BILL. [*escaping from her caresses and sitting suddenly upright.*] That Jim 'Arris—uppish rotter ! I thought 'e was sweet on yer—couldn't stand any of 'is sauce. 'E 'ad the better o' me then, the big lolloping bully, but I'll teach 'im yet.

LIZ. [*coaxingly, but unsteadily.*] Let 'im alone, Bill ; 'e ain't worth troublin' abaht. Let us live peaceful as we've done before. [BILL *mumbles under his breath.*] Bill, yer don't know 'ow sick I am of all this. I want ter start ag'in.

It's awful alwus bein' uncertain abaht wot's goin' to 'appen. Let you an' me live quiet tergether. . . . 'E's a big man is Jim 'Arris, remember. . . .

BILL. Yus, I know 'e's a big man, and that's w'y I'd like ter break 'is blasted neck . . . pretendin' ter be yer pal and all the w'ile 'e's a-foolin' arahnd yer ole woman. . . .

LIZ. [*fiercely.*] Stop that talk, Bill: I ain't again' ter put up with it, ser don't yer think it.

BILL. Awright; it slipped aht; wasn't thinkin' o' you. . . .

LIZ. [*only half propitiated.*] Oh! . . . It's gittin' late, Bill; must be nigh one o'clock. Let's get ter bed . . . and promise me yer won't interfere any more with them 'Arrises.

BILL. [*sharply.*] Wot yer mean, interfere with the 'Arrises?

LIZ. Leave 'em alone; let 'em go their way and we'll go ourn. [*Unconvincingly.*] They aint' worth troublin' abaht.

BILL. [*suspiciously.*] You seem mighty anxious for me not to interfere with the 'Arrises. . . .

LIZ. I like a peaceful life. It don't seem worth w'ile puttin' yer 'ead in the noose for someb'dy else ter pull tight.

BILL. [*aggressively.*] An' so do I like a quiet

life w'en I can git it withaht bein' sat on. . . .
No, me gal : this is my business. [*He jumps up.*]
I'm again' ter do wot I think fit in this 'ere
matter. [*He takes the lamp and goes to the bed-
room door. LIZ does not move. He turns round
when he reaches the door.*] Ain't yer comin' ?

LIZ. [*sullenly.*] No. [*BILL approaches her.*]

BILL. Wot's the matter nah ? [*LIZ does not
reply.*] Aht wiv it !

LIZ. You never does nothink I asks yer, Bill.
W'y carn't yer leave this 'ere affair ter blow over
by itself ?

BILL. [*standing by the side of the arm-chair,
lamp in hand.*] 'Cause I ain't again' to.

LIZ. Wot d'yer want ter meddle with it again
for ? You don't know w'ere it'll end. 'E may
do you an injury. An' even if 'e don't, you may
git yerself inter trouble . . . p'lice court,
p'r'aps . . . lose yer job an' all.

BILL *stands looking straight in front of him
and makes no reply. A struggle seems to
be going on in his mind. Still holding the
lamp, he walks about the room. LIZ watches
his movements with an intent expression
on her face. The light of the lamp falling
on her shows that she is pale and overwrought.
Suddenly BILL goes off at a tangent straight*

up to her. His voice is fierce and determined.

BILL. Wot's this mean ?

LIZ. [*cowering.*] Mean ?

BILL. Yus, mean.

LIZ. [*on the defensive, but frightened.*] No-think, Bill. You are one ter ketch people up. I tell yer I'm sick of it all. If yo're gain' ter make my life a misery talkin' abaht revenge on Jim 'Arris, I tell yer straight I ain't again' ter stand it, and you'll 'ave ter talk ter deaf walls and empty grates . . . 'tain't likely I'm gain' ter put up with yer continual snarlin' . . . so yer can please yerself.

BILL. That's wot I'm gain' ter do. Wot's Jim 'Arris ter you I should like ter know.

LIZ. [*provokingly.*] Never you mind wot Jim 'Arris is ter me. That ain't the question. You said yer could trust me ; well, if yer carn't, we'd best part company.

BILL. [*more tranquil.*] Oh, awright ; sorry I spoke ! [*He goes to her.*] 'Ere, come along, Liz.

He makes to embrace her ; she repulses him. He stands stiffly erect clenching the fist of his right hand, his left holding the lamp over his head. His face shows signs of inward

torment, and his expression suddenly gives place to one of ferocity. His next words seem to burst from him.

'Ere, clear aht of it! [*She cowers.*] D'y'ear? Git aht of it before I throw the lamp at yer 'ead. . . .

LIZ. [*frightened.*] Bill. . . .

BILL. Clear aht!

LIZ. [*leaping in terror from the chair.*] But w'y?

BILL. [*at the top of his voice.*] Never you mind w'y; you jest clear aht of it. [*With suppressed passion.*] I can 'ardly keep meself dahn as it is. If yer don't git aht of it at once I won't answer fer the consequences.

LIZ. [*hurrying away.*] It's all a mistake, Bill.

BILL places the lamp heavily on the table: it goes out. He rushes menacingly in her direction. There is the sound of a heavy fall and a muttered "damn!" Then the door is opened and the landing-light shows the hurrying form of LIZ, who snatches a shawl from the door-peg and makes her escape.

BILL rises from the floor: he had stumbled over a chair. He gropes about the room,

presently striking a match and lighting the lamp. He looks about him with a scared air and mutters "Gone." He opens the door and looks over the landing banisters; the street door bangs. He returns to the room. His arms fall limply to his sides. He crosses heavily to the fireplace and leans against the mantelpiece, his hand falling on one of the ornaments. His mind wandering, he examines the ornament with intense curiosity, comes to his senses and flings it violently into the fireplace. The noise seems to please him: he takes its fellow and treats it in the same manner. He laughs hysterically; falls supine into the arm-chair and gazes steadily in front of him with an immobile face. Gradually his expression changes from vacancy to discontent, then to bitterness, to anger, to tenderness and anguish. He is overcome by the torment of his conflicting feelings. His head falls forward into his hands and he sobs bitterly.

SCENE IV

The doss-house, between one and two o'clock.

JIM HARRIS *is writing. He looks up thoughtfully, dips his pen in the ink and writes again. A few moments elapse and then one hears the distant swing-door, followed by a light tapping at the shutter. JIM rises, pulls back the shutter and sees LIZ. He says nothing, closes the shutter, looks surprised, and then opens the door, waiting for LIZ to enter. She walks heavily and wearily well into the room, glances at the half-finished letter on the table.*

JIM. Well ?

LIZ. Wot's that ?

JIM. A letter ter me mother : I got to explain things, yer know . . . keepin' back wot I think proper.

LIZ. You may as well tear it up.

JIM. [*incredulously.*] W'y, wot's the matter ?

LIZ. [*vehemently.*] Oh Gawd ! 'Ow I 'ate men !

JIM. [*going quickly to her side and putting his arm on her shoulder.*] Liz, dear, wot's up ?

LIZ. [*giving way and falling closer to him.*] It's all up. I've bin 'ome.

JIM. [*standing back from her and regarding her incredulously, but with dawning distress.*] Wot? Bin 'ome?

LIZ. Yers.

JIM. Woffor?

LIZ. [*distractedly.*] Oh, I dunno. It's no good o' you a-carryin' on abaht it. I done it nah and it carn't be undone.

JIM. [*nonplussed.*] Done wot? [*Tenderly.*] Tell me wot you've bin and gorne an' done.

LIZ. [*moving a little away from him and speaking eagerly, but brokenly.*] W'en I left you I come to me senses. I knoo I'd never be able ter do wot you wantid me to. I've alwus bin respectable and that. . . . I liked yer, Jim: I wasn't kiddin' yer, straight. I like yer now better'n 'im, better'n any man I know of . . . but some'ah I couldn't take the plunge. I bin brought up respectable, and even if I 'ated 'im ever so, I'd 'a' gorne back to 'im. . . . I was 'is wife an' all. Wot was I ter do? 'Ere was you ready an' willin' ter take me as I was, but 'avin' no lawful claim on me; there was 'im ready and willin', too, and me bein' 'is lawful wife. I liked you best, straight, Jim, and sometimes I

feel as though I 'ated 'im, but . . . oh !
I dunno, but I wantid ter do the right
thing. . . .

JIM. [*recoiling involuntarily.*] You couldn't
even come back and tell me ?

LIZ. I never thought o' that. Jest as I was
goin' inter that there lodgin' 'ouse up the road
it all seemed to come on me with a rush. [*She
commences to sway as if in pain.*] I didn't know
wot ter do . . . I felt as though I was goin' all
wrong. . . . Men don't know wot it is. I saw
meself on the streets, and that. . . . An' swop
me bob, Jim, I never meant no 'arm ter you, but
I decided ter go back 'ome.

JIM. [*steadily.*] Well ?

LIZ. An' I went.

JIM. [*harshly.*] Well, an' wot' 'a' yer come
back 'ere for ?

She looks up at him suddenly.

LIZ. 'E come 'ome ; we 'ad another rah and
'e turned me aht o' the 'ouse.

JIM. [*steadily.*] Wot did yer rah abaht ?

LIZ. You . . . 'e said you'd bin makin' up
ter me.

JIM. An' wot did you say ?

LIZ. I said you 'adn't.

JIM. You told a lie abaht it ?

LIZ. Wot else was I ter do ? 'E would 'a' murdered me if 'e'd 'a' knoo.

JIM. [*going away from her.*] Women are all alike ; they ain't got no backbone.

LIZ. [*persistently.*] Wot could I 'a' done ?

JIM. [*turning round on her swiftly.*] Told 'im the truth.

LIZ. An' bin killed ?

JIM. [*fatalistically.*] Well, you got ter die once, ain't yer ?

LIZ. [*anguishfully.*] Wish I was dead now, that I do.

JIM. [*after a brief pause.*] You ain't told me yet wot you come rahnd 'ere ag'in for.

LIZ. You won't believe me if I do.

JIM. Yus, I will.

LIZ. [*in a low voice.*] 'E was in sech a tearin' rage w'en I come away and was so bitter agin' you, that I thought I'd come 'ere an' warn yer. I don't want you ter suffer from 'is rage.

JIM. [*whimsically.*] So yer come rahnd ter save my life ? Poor Liz !

LIZ. You don't know 'im w'en 'e's rahsed ; 'e's a match fer two men.

JIM. Not 'im.

LIZ. But can't yer keep aht of 'is way ?

JIM. Wot, run away from 'im ? 'T ain't likely.

LIZ. [*pleading.*] Oh, yer must, Jim, yer must ; I'd never fergive meself if anythink was to 'appen ter yer now.

JIM. [*softening considerably.*] Don't you worry abaht me, ole gal ; I can look arter meself, don't you fret. But 'ah abaht you ?

LIZ. [*after a pause.*] Jim, I might be inclined nah, ter do wot you said.

JIM. [*incredulously.*] Wot, really ?

LIZ. [*softly.*] Yers, Jim. Yer see me feelin's fer 'im 'as all turned ter bitterness, nah. 'E would 'a' killed me if I'd stayed another minute, and seein' 'im so bitter agin' me and not believin' me an' all, made me feel that I couldn't never go back to 'im.

JIM. But o' course 'e didn't believe yer ; you wasn't tellin' 'im the truth.

LIZ. But 'e wasn't ter know.

JIM. Easy enough ter tell w'en people is tellin' lies. . . . Tell yer straight, Liz, I don't blame 'im.

LIZ. [*surprised.*] Yer don't ? Then prap's yer don't want me ter go with you, nah ?

JIM. [*after a fairly long silence.*] No, Liz, I don't think I do.

LIZ. [*helplessly.*] All right, Jim. [*She gets up.*] I can understand 'ah yer feel. But may Gawd strike me dahn dead w'ere I stand if I'm not tellin' yer the truth w'en I say I didn't mean yer no 'arm. That you can believe, Jim.

JIM *looks down at her moodily, the corners of his mouth drawn grimly down.*

LIZ *draws her shawl tighter around her.*

Ol, well ; goo'bye, Jim. [*She holds out her hand.*] Sorry I bin the cause of all this 'ere bother. Take care of yerself ; and Jim, fer my sake, don't 'ave no truck with 'im. 'E may do yer some mischief.

JIM *takes her hand in his, still staring fixedly at her, saying nothing. He releases her hand and his own drops heavily to his side. LIZ walks away towards the door, JIM remains motionless with bowed head. When she reaches the door she opens it and gives one more look round. She extends her arms, and looks at him imploringly.*

[*Plaintively.*] Jim. . . .

JIM *walks firmly towards her and shuts the door.*

JIM. [*putting his hand on her shoulder.*] It's no good. Yer know it ain't. I carn't let yer go like that.

LIZ. [*agitatedly.*] Yers, Jim ; I must go nah ;

E*

let me go. Wot's the good? You'll never trust me, yer know yer won't.

JIM. [*with a profound sigh.*] Gawd 'elp me, that's true. But w'ether I trust yer or w'ether I don't, I want yer. [*He speaks with deep emotion.*] Some'ah or other I feel sorry fer that Bill 'Iggins nah. I didn't before. Of course 'e's a brute, but p'raps 'e was afraid o' losing yer. It do seem a dirty trick ter play on a pal, arter all. I wouldn't never 'a' thought o' such a thing if I 'adn't thought 'im a damned dirty rotter.

LIZ *stands motionless, her face expressing suffering and indecision. After a short pause* JIM *starts to speak in a different tone of voice.*

Supposin' Bill 'Iggins and me stood 'ere and yer could choose between us, which would yer choose?

LIZ. I'd be *afraid* ter go back ter Bill nah. . . .

JIM. [*catching her up.*] Jest wot I thought; it's 'im yer like; it ain't me. [*He looks about the room hopelessly.*] No, Liz, me ole pal, it ain't no use tryin to 'ide it; if yer could go back to 'im withaht any trouble, back to 'im you'd go.

LIZ. [*doubtfully.*] No, Jim; I don't think so.

JIM. Yus yer would: I know. Ah well,

can't be 'elped. Wot are yer gain' ter do? I think you'd better go back ter Bill 'Iggins. We can make it awright nah—tell 'im it was all owin' to a misunderstandin' like.

LIZ. [*pleading.*] No, Jim, don't . . . I couldn't go back to 'im nah; I couldn't: 'e'd kill me.

JIM. [*helplessly.*] Wot are yer gain' ter do then?

LIZ. Don't you bother. I'll clear aht. Dessay I can do somethink. . . . Goo'bye, Jim.

JIM. [*overcome by his feelings.*] No, Liz; it carn't be "goo'bye." I carn't live withaht yer nah; it's all very well you a-thinkin' you can make it the same as it was before I knoo yer: I know diff'rent. Gals wasn't in my line till you come along, but nah I want you . . . you . . . [*He breaks off.*]

LIZ. [*whispering, yielding to his tenderness.*] Jim. . . .

JIM. LIZ. . . .

They stand quietly together for a moment. JIM's eyes wander about the room distractedly as if he were searching for some solution to the problem. Presently something fixes his attention; he turns to LIZ and henceforward

there is a new note in his voice, manifesting a fixed determination.

Come an' sit dahn.

LIZ. [*unsuspiciously.*] Woffor ?

JIM. [*softly.*] 'Cos I want yer to.

JIM places a chair for her near the table and they both sit down. He looks at her fixedly, and she, looking up, catches the strange gleam in his eyes.

LIZ. [*nervously.*] Wot's the matter, Jim ?

JIM. [*laughing quietly.*] Matter, w'y nothink,

Liz.

Pause. A strained expression appears in LIZ'S eyes ; she is frightened but fascinated by his demeanour.

Funny thing, Liz. I never 'ad a gal before in all me life.

LIZ. [*uncomfortably.*] Reely ?

JIM. Funny, ain't it ?

LIZ. Yers, Jim.

JIM. [*thoughtfully.*] Some blokes seem ter be awful gorne on gals. I never was, not till you come 'ere. Funny, ain't it ?

LIZ. Yers, Jim. . . . But I must be gettin' orf. [*She attempts to rise, but his arm restrains her.*]

JIM. [*tenderly.*] No, Liz, dear, wot yer want

ter go for ? Me an' you 'a' got ter live tergether in fucher . . . me an' you . . . all alone. . . . It'll be nice, Liz, dear. . . .

LIZ. But you didn't want me ter come with you, Jim. . . .

JIM. [*straightening himself with an effort, and brushing his hair from his forehead.*] No, I don't . . .

LIZ. [*frightened.*] Well, then. . . .

JIM. [*breathing uneasily.*] You don't understand.

LIZ. [*scared.*] No, I don't. 'Ere, I'd better be orf. [*She again attempts to rise, but he still detains her.*]

JIM. [*endeavouring to make his words very explicit.*] It's like this 'ere : it ain't you wot's a-comin' ter me ; it's me wot's a-comin' ter you. . . . See ? [*His hand seeks his forehead again and the bewilderment in his eyes grows more pronounced.*]

LIZ. [*more and more frightened.*] No, I don't see.

JIM. [*confidingly.*] O' course, it's all pervided you ever git there, or I ever come after yer. We might go ter diff'rent places. [*He laughs knowingly.*]

LIZ. [*now thoroughly alarmed.*] Jim, I'm

goin' ; I don't know wot you're talkin' abaht. Wot's the matter with yer. [*Suspiciously.*] You ain't bin drinkin' too, 'ave yer ?

JIM. [*quietly.*] No, I ain't bin drinking, not me.

His arm softly leaves her shoulder and alights gently on the table behind him ; he grasps a knife in his hand.

Liz. . . .

LIZ. Yers, Jim ?

JIM. Ain't it a funny thing you ain't never give me a kiss.

LIZ. Law, no ; I ain't known yer long. . . . On'y ternight. . . .

JIM. [*slyly.*] 'Oo yer kiddin' ?

LIZ. [*indignantly.*] 'Cawse I never knoo yer before ternight.

JIM. [*thoughtfully.*] But I seem to 'ave known yer fer years an' years—ever since I can remember. 'Struth ! Well, ain't yer gain' ter give me a kiss, Liz ?

LIZ. [*nervously.*] Awright.

She bends towards him. He clasps her to him tenderly. They kiss and remain motionless for a moment. Then with a sudden strong movement of the arm JIM plunges the knife into her back.

LIZ. [*thrilling with the suddenness of the attack.*] Jim, wot' yer done ?

She falls heavily full length on to the floor, a low sigh escaping her lips.

The knife falls noisily from JIM'S hand. As LIZ falls he kneels down by her side and raises her head to his knee, keeping a protective arm about her.

JIM. Awright, ole gal. It's awright.

The shuffling of footsteps is heard in the bedroom and presently MRS HARRIS hurries in, dressed scantily. She is half-asleep.

MRS HARRIS. [*with a look of disgust.*] Fine goin's on, I must say.

JIM. [*looking up at her prosaically.*] Hullo, mother !

MRS HARRIS. Is that 'er ?

JIM. [*affectionately, glancing down at LIZ.*] Yus, mother ; it's Liz.

MRS HARRIS. [*approaching them.*] Yer don't mean ter say she's asleep 'ere ?

JIM. [*matter-of-fact.*] Yus, mother ; 'sleep. She fell asleep a minute o' two ago.

MRS HARRIS. [*hurrying forward angrily.*] I'll sleep 'er, the 'ussy !

JIM. [*putting his fingers to his lips.*] Ssh ! Don't wake 'er. She's very tired—so'm I.

[*He laughs knowingly.*] Tirin' work, yer know, mother—up all night as well as all day.

MRS HARRIS. [*scenting something untoward.*] Let me 'ave a look at 'er. [*She approaches LIZ, half fearfully, leans down and touches her and draws back with a moan of horror.*] Jim, 'oo's bin an' done this ?

JIM. It's awright ; she's on'y asleep.

MRS HARRIS. [*Death lending her some of its dignity.*] She's dead.

JIM. Eh ?

MRS HARRIS. [*monotonously.*] Dead, me boy, dead !

JIM. [*bewildered, his hand pressing his forehead.*] 'Oo done it ?

MRS HARRIS. [*shaking him by the shoulder.*] Didn't you do it ?

JIM. Me ?

He looks at his mother fixedly for a moment ; then straight in front of him. Then he gently replaces the form of LIZ on the floor.

Yers, I killed Liz. . . . I don't know w'y I done it . . . but som'ah the thought that she was un'appy, that 'e was the cause of it all, and I 'ad it in me power ter make 'er 'appy, was too much fer me, an' I give way. . . .

MRS HARRIS. [*distraught.*] It means swingin'.

JIM. [*in a quiet, heavy voice.*] 'Angin's a clean death. . . . It ain't sech an awful thing ter die. Death ain't nothing . . . nothing. [*He looks down at LIZ and concludes in a low voice.*] Yers, Death's best.

MRS HARRIS *regards him silently.*

FINIS

PRINTED BY
TURNBULL AND SPEARS,
EDINBURGH

A DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE OF MODERN PLAYS

ON THE READING OF PLAYS

"It is a tribute to the literary quality of our modern plays that so many of them gain rather than lose in the printed page."—*Globe*.

"A drama issued in book-form, and furnished with that brisk commentary on the text which Mr. Bernard Shaw set the fashion of supplying, takes on something of the character of a novel, and has the advantage of being very much shorter."—*Athenæum*.

"As soon as the imagination has been trained to 'see' the characters, to 'hear' their talk, to create their surroundings quickly from a hint or two about scenery, to realise the workings of their minds with the aid of stage directions—then reading plays gives more pleasure than reading novels. There is no padding. No arid wastes of descriptive twaddle delay the action. No tiresome moralising by the author insults the intelligent reader, who is quite well able to draw conclusions for himself. Anyone who is accustomed to reading good plays finds the average novel slow and heavy with a burden of unnecessary words."—*Daily Mail*.

PUBLISHED BY
SIDGWICK & JACKSON, LTD.
3 ADAM STREET, LONDON, W.C.

GRANVILLE BARKER

"Mr. Barker . . . takes no joy in the game of sticking pins into convention. He outrages convention when he wishes to ; but he only wishes to because it gets in the way of the greater things that are his real subject. The desire to shock has no place in Mr. Barker's published work ; the desire to teach has a great place. And Mr. Barker stands at the head of a movement that, in English drama, is undoubtedly new."—*Times Literary Supplement*, Oct. 7, 1909.

"His plays are among the few that are worth seeing and among the still fewer that are worth reading, and reading seriously and more than once."—*Morning Post*, Sept. 27, 1909.

"A remarkable talent lies here ; perhaps a very great one. Mr. Barker's literary faculty is in itself unusual. He is a serious and highly competent workman, he writes no dull or weak lines ; he can be both allusive and direct, and now and then he approaches Ibsen's power of imparting to prose the incomparable emotional effect of poetry."—*Nation*, Sept. 18, 1909.

"Whatever Mr. Granville Barker does on a stage, or behind it, is a matter for both respect and delight. One has to respect, too, what he writes ; for he will take none of the cheap and nasty ways to a kind of success ; he tries for fine things, his ideas are liberal, his circumstantial observation of a scene is very close, and his nicety of characterisation . . . borders on the marvellous, like the discrimination of expert wool-sorters and tea-tasters."—*Manchester Guardian*.

"Le théâtre est avant tout pour lui un moyen de combat."—*Revue Germanique*, 1912.

THE VOYSEY INHERITANCE

This play deals with the moral problems that present themselves to Edward Voysey, when he learns that the solicitor's business which he inherits from his father is based on a system of misappropriation of trust funds. He seeks justification for his attempt to put matters straight, and his actions are criticised from various points of view by the other members of his family. Finally he is reconciled to the distasteful task by the encouragement of his cousin Alice Maitland.

"An amazingly vivid, grimly humorous picture of a prosperous mid-Victorian English family; it is merciless and intensely comic. . . . Moreover, it has a delicate, subdued strain of love-interest, with a pleasantly pathetic flavour."—*Westminster Gazette*.

"The play represents one of the very best specimens of the modern English dramatic school. It is thoughtful, it is serious, it is interesting, it is dramatic; it touches real problems, and gives us real personages."—*W. L. Courtney in the Daily Telegraph*.

Eighth Impression. Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

Also in "Three Plays," with "The Marrying of Anne Leete" and "Waste." Cloth, 5s. net.

* * All Plays in this list, unless otherwise described,
* are published in Crown octavo, $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ inches.



WASTE

"enforces with a certain sombre power" (says the *Church Family News*), "and without pandering to pruriency, the teaching so often ignored, so bitterly resented, so surely true, that the wages of sin is death." The story, put briefly, shows how the career of Henry Trebell, a rising young politician, is ruined by his momentary intrigue with an attractive but empty-headed married woman. She refuses to face the scandal that is in prospect, and dies as the result of her attempt to destroy Trebell's child. Trebell, with his political career cut short, finds nothing left to live for, and commits suicide.

"To have read *Waste* twice through carefully is to recognise it as a fine intellectual achievement—subtle, profound, interesting, just. . . . It is packed with subjects, and with original thought about those subjects."—*Times*.

"This play is a superb tragedy, relentless, pitiful, veracious."—*Daily Chronicle*.

"A reading of it confirms our opinion that in it we have one of the notable plays of modern times."—*Athenæum*.

"It is full of ideas, it is rich in knowledge of life. Its one sex phase, to which doubtless objection was taken, makes for purity and anti-sensualism as much as the most verbally correct of modern comic operas or musical comedies may make for the opposite."—*C. K. S. in the Sphere*.

Eighth Impression. Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6a. net.

*Also in "Three Plays," with "The Marrying of Ann Leete"
and "The Voysey Inheritance." Cloth, 5s. net.*

THE MADRAS HOUSE

"The unifying principle of the play," Mr. Max Beerbohm said in the *Saturday Review*, "is that the theme throughout is the present and future of woman—woman regarded from various standpoints, moral, æsthetic, economic, and so on." Constantine Madras, once a man-milliner of Bond Street, has turned Mahommedan. His brother-in-law, Henry Huxtable, has six unmarried daughters at home in Denmark Hill, and a large drapery establishment where the living-in system has produced suspicion of a scandal. Another view is presented by Eustace Perrin State, a sentimental American business-man who has come to negotiate for the purchase of the Madras House. Philip and Jessica Madras, with their friend Major Thomas, also contribute to the debate.

"You can read *The Madras House* at your leisure, dip into it here and there, turn a tit-bit over lovingly on the palate . . . and the result is, in our experience, a round of pleasure. . . . That priceless companion the sentimental American capitalist, Mr. State . . . 'has never read the Koran—an oversight [*he makes a mental note*].' . . . *The Madras House* is so good in print that everybody should make a mental note to read it, like Mr. State with the Koran."—*Times*.

"The play has a cornucopious flow of ideas ; it has wit, pungency, surprisingness, relevance to modern life, and perfect freedom from stupidities of every kind ; and it gives you the feeling of contact with an uncommon, eager, luminous mind."—*Manchester Guardian*.

"Tous ceux qui s'intéressent aux mœurs véritables de l'Angleterre devront lire la pièce de Mr. Granville Barker."—*Mercure de France*.

Third Impression. Cloth, 2s. net ; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

GRANVILLE BARKER

✕

THE MARRYING OF ANN LEETE

is set in the eighteenth century. The play shows how Ann, on the verge of contracting a marriage of convenience with Lord John Carp, revolts from the decadence of her family and deliberately marries a healthy young gardener. "We've all been in too great a hurry to be civilised," she says to her husband; "I mean to go back . . . I was afraid to live . . . and now I am content."

"Delicate, sensuous, half-modish, half-poetic."—*Nation*.

"As a piece of literature it is splendid; its language is full of point and wit, and the scenes and costumes help to conjure up the idea of a picture by Watteau."—*Court Journal*.

Fourth Impression. Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

Note.]

✕

THREE PLAYS

By GRANVILLE BARKER

includes

THE MARRYING OF ANN LEETE

THE VOYSEY INHERITANCE

AND WASTE

Cloth, 5s. net. (Postage, 4d.)

Also a Special Edition, limited to 50 copies, signed by the Author, extra bound in three volumes, in a case, 21s. net per set.

(Postage, 6d.)

PRUNELLA

or Love in a Dutch Garden

By LAURENCE HOUSMAN and GRANVILLE BARKER

tells how Pierrot saw Prunella through the hedge of her aunts' formal garden, and crept through to her, bringing romance (as she thought) ; how he wooed her and carried her off through the window of her room down a ladder of dreams ; how he deserted her thereafter, and left her desolate ; and finally how she found him again when everything seemed to have turned against her.

"A very charming love-tale, which works slowly to a climax of great and touching beauty."—*Daily News*.

"This exquisite little fantasy is not the least of the additions to our dramatic literature which we owe to the Court Theatre enterprise. It reads as charmingly as it acted, and that is saying much. It is full of quaint invention, humour, irony, and pathos."—*Tribune*.

Pott 4to, with frontispiece by Laurence Housman and music of "Pierrot's Serenade" (which can be obtained separately, 1s. 6d. net), decorated cloth, 5s. net.

Seventh Impression. Theatre Edition, Paper, 1s. net.

x.

ANATOL

A Sequence of Dialogues

By ARTHUR SCHNITZLER, paraphrased for the English
Stage by GRANVILLE BARKER.

CONTENTS

(I) Ask no Questions and you'll hear no Stories—(II) A Christmas Present—(III) An Episode—(IV) Keepsakes—(V) A Farewell Supper—(VI) Dying Pangs—(VII) The Wedding Morning.

Anatol is an amorous but inconstant bachelor of Vienna ; his friend Max is another, but more philosophical and phlegmatic. Anatol appears in all the Dialogues, Max in five of them ; but there is a different lady in each of the seven, and with them as foils Anatol shows himself by turns sentimental, jealous, disillusioned, self-critical, absurdly vain, and incurably volatile. "He makes a fine art of his love-affairs, and carefully diagnoses the sensations they produce."

"Anatol is a bad lot, but the dialogues in which he figures are little masterpieces of polished, glittering lucidity and point. . . . Mr. Granville Barker has certainly made excellent English of them."—*Manchester Guardian*.

Third Impression. Cloth, 2s. net ; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

THE TRAGEDY OF POMPEY THE GREAT

ARGUMENT.—In the years 50 and 49 B.C., Cneius Pompeius Magnus, the head of the patrician party, contested with C. Julius Cæsar, the popular leader, for supreme power in the State. Their jealousy led to the trouble of the Civil War, in which, after many battles, Cneius Pompeius Magnus was miserably killed.

ACT I. The determination of Pompeius to fight with his rival, then marching upon Rome.

ACT II. The triumph of Pompey's generalship at Dyrrachium. His overthrow by the generals of his staff. His defeat at Pharsalia.

ACT III. The death of that great ruler on the seashore of Pelusium in Egypt.

"In this Roman tragedy, while we admire its closely knit structure, dramatic effectiveness, and atmosphere of reality . . . the warmth and colour of the diction are the most notable things. . . . He knows the art of phrasing; he has the instinct for and by them."—*Athenæum*.

"Fine, nervous, dramatic English. Words which eat into the soul, which have a meaning, which are revelatory of character. A fine virility about the whole play and its conception. An altogether admirable piece of writing which fully justifies Mr. Masefield's real literary distinction."—*Observer*.

"He has written a great tragedy. . . . The dialogue is written in strong, simple, and nervous prose, flashing with poetic insight, significance, and suggestion. The characters are intensely alive, the situations are handled by a master hand, and the whole play is pregnant with that high and solemn pathos which is the gift of the born writer of tragedies."—*Morning Post*.

Third Impression. Cloth, 3s. 6d. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

X

RUTHERFORD & SON

The real hero or villain of this play is literally "Rutherford & Son," *i.e.* the firm established by the lifelong labour of John Rutherford. To this idol in his old age he sacrifices everything; he robs his son of a trade-secret to maintain the Works, and to maintain the firm's dignity he drives from his house his daughter and his trusted head-man, who are secret lovers. Opposed and hated by his children, he is at last driven to bargain with his daughter-in-law for control of the grandson who is to carry on the business; and "Rutherford's" emerges triumphant.

"Miss Sowerby's *Rutherford and Son* is the best first play since *Chains* of Miss Elizabeth Baker. . . . Her play is exactly like *Chains* in the complete subordination of everything to a persistent main theme. Both plays are the work of an æsthetic puritan."—*Saturday Review*.

"Literary enough to make excellent reading."—*Daily Express*.

"It is a finely constructed play and a remarkable first work."—*Catholic Herald*.

"I have read few good acting plays which are so consecutive and satisfactory to read."—*T. P.'s Weekly*.

Second Impression. Cloth, 2s. 6d. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

ELIZABETH BAKER

CHAINS

X

This play, originally produced by the Play Actors' Society, and subsequently one of the successes of the Frohman Repertory Theatre, deals with the life of London clerks and their families. Miss Baker's hero, Charlie Wilson, struggles to emancipate himself from his narrow life; and is on the point of emigrating to the Colonies when he finds that he is going to become a father. Such are the "chains" that tie him to his life at home.

"It is not often that the theatre in England sets one thinking; still less often does it open up an imperial horizon. But the play called *Chains*, at the Repertory Theatre, does both."—*Daily Mail*.

"It is just the sort of play that one likes to buy and read, for it is real and alive, and a play full of ideas."—*Daily Mail*.

Third Impression. Cloth, 1s. 6d. net; Paper, 1s. net.

THE PRICE OF THOMAS SCOTT

+

This play, written with all the intimate knowledge of her characters that is to be expected of the author of *Chains*, shows the struggles of a draper, with a failing business and a growing son, against the temptation to sell his shop to a purchaser who intends to convert it into a dancing-hall. Thomas Scott is a devout chapel-goer and a Puritan, and realises that he cannot serve both God and Mammon.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN

✕ PAINS AND PENALTIES :

The Defence of Queen Caroline

This play has been described by the Lord Chamberlain—in the course of refusing to license its performance—as dealing with “a sad historical episode of comparatively recent date in the life of an unhappy lady.” Mr. Housman, in introducing his defence of Queen Caroline, Consort of George IV., points out that the “unhappy lady” has been dead for ninety years, during which period her memory has rested under a cloud which the main drift of his play is calculated to remove.

“This play has been censored. It is a play by a poet and artist. And it goes very deeply and hauntingly into the heart. The note that it sounds is the note of Justice, and he would indeed be either a fearful or a fawning reader who could find aught to object to in it.”—*Observer*.

Cloth, 3s. 6d. net ; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

✕ THE CHINESE LANTERN

A fantastic play in a quaint Chinese setting, telling how Tikipu, the drudge of an art-school, tried to learn how to paint, and was taken away into a magic picture of Wiowani for three years. Meanwhile the little slave-girl Mee-Mee faithfully awaits his return, which occurs just as she has given up hope and is about to poison herself to avoid a forced marriage with Yunglangtsi, a gross body with a grocer's soul. Mee-Mee and Tikipu run away together.

Pott 4to, Cloth, 3s. 6d. net.



FOUR PLAYS

**James and John : Miles Dixon : Mary's Wedding :
and A Short Way with Authors**

James and John describes with true pathos the home-coming of a convict father who has served his sentence for embezzlement and the way in which he is received by his family.

Miles Dixon and *Mary's Wedding* are two dialect dramas of Westmoreland folk, the former of a tramp-poet wooing a married woman by night, the latter of a girl who failed to redeem her lover from his drunkard's habits.

A Short Way with Authors is a brilliant satirical farce directed against the methods and mannerisms of the popular actor-manager.

"*Miles Dixon* is the only play we know in which a writer has shown himself strong enough to train upon Synge and yet be all the more fully himself after it. . . . It is one of the most deeply moving of all modern plays."—*Manchester Guardian*.

"No one who reads discriminatingly the collection of short plays . . . can fail to recognise in three of the four not only poetic conception but also the language and treatment of poetry. The exception is just a little joke dashed off in high spirits."—*Sunday Times*.

"These plays contain the best work he has yet given to the public."—*Scotsman*.

Cloth, 2s. 6d. net.

x

THE TRIAL OF JEANNE D'ARC

follows with some exactitude the actual course, in historical outline, of the trial of Jeanne d'Arc for heresy in January-May 1431.

"It is a powerful presentment of a situation charged with dramatic interest ; the reproduction of an atmosphere of political and ecclesiastical chicane, of hypocrisy, trickery, and brutality, involving the solitary figure of the Maid. It presents the concentrated essence of the public life of the fifteenth century—an age of a decadent and sophistical Church, and an equally decadent militarism, finding their contrast in the earlier religious ideal personified in Jeanne."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"The play can be read with continual interest and frequent admiration in the study."—*English Review*.

"Mr. Garnett has succeeded in reproducing the historical atmosphere in no slight measure. Certainly, also, he has not failed to reveal much of the extraordinary psychological interest of the trial."—*Westminster Gazette*.

Cloth, 3s. 6d. net ; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

MARY BROOME ✱

"Mr. Monkhouse's play is fantastic, though it has the great merit of directness in the handling of its situation. Its story is that of the seduction of a servant-girl by a semi-artist, and then enforced marriage upon the insistence of a rigidly conventional parent. . . . *Mary Broome* was one of the most interesting of the plays presented by Miss Horniman's company. . . . It has a quality rare enough in the theatre, a quality of sweetness in irony that is hardly to be found in English outside the pages of Mr. Henry James."—*Gilbert Cannan in Rhythm*.

"Unquestionably the strongest, the most courageous, and the most penetrating play that we have had from an Englishman this decade. . . . It is a drama of which the British stage may well be proud."—*Manchester Courier*.

Second Impression. Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

THE EDUCATION OF MR. SURRAGE ✱

In this comedy the son and two daughters of Mr. Surrage, a retired business-man, seek to bring their father's ideas up to date by inviting to their house for a week-end a budding dramatist, an artist with more reputation than money, and a bohemian lady. By acquaintance with them the "education" of Mr. Surrage is accomplished at the expense of his children's ideals, and not without much amusement to the reader.

"The more the comedy is studied, the more its artistic beauties grow upon one."—*Nation*.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

LADY BELL

X

THE WAY THE MONEY GOES

"The story of the simple-minded excellent woman caught for a time by the wiles of the street 'bookie' and the sneaking pedlar, is humorous and also pathetic. Lady Bell makes her people live; obviously they are founded upon observation of life, and the fine insight into character that is the foundation of imagination in drama. True artistic instinct prevents her from turning the play into a pamphlet."
—*Westminster Gazette*.

"Décidément cet ouvrage restera comme l'un des plus saisissants tableaux de la vie ouvrière dans l'Angleterre contemporaine."—*Revue Germanique*.

Cloth, 1s. 6d. net; Paper, 1s. net.

JAMES BYRNE

X

LORDS & MASTERS

This is a study of the relations between a brutal husband and his wife and the wife's admirer, in which the wife undergoes a revulsion of feeling on discovering a liaison between her lover and his landlady's daughter.

"The technique of the play is exceptionally good. Every sentence helps forward the action. There is no irrelevance."
—*Daily News*.

"This thoughtful and interesting little play."—*Glasgow Herald*.

Cloth, 1s. 6d. net; Paper, 1s. net.



HINDLE WAKES

has caused a great deal of discussion wherever it has been performed. The son of a wealthy Lancashire mill-owner has accidentally met, and spent a seaside week-end with, a mill-girl, the daughter of a working man, who is, nevertheless, an old friend of his father's. The young man is already engaged to be married. When his fault is discovered, his parents and those of the girl determine that he must make "an honest woman" of her; but when everything is apparently arranged, the mill-girl strenuously resists, and refuses to marry him. The play ends with a powerful scene between the young man and his fiancée.

"His characters are all living persons, no mere puppets, and because of that he is a real dramatist."—*Bookman*.

"A notable addition to modern drama. He raises no new problem, but his treatment of an old one breathes the spirit of the age in its refusal to be bound by conventional ideas."—*Dundee Advertiser*.

"It is as good to read as to see; and better still to think over."—*Theatreland*.

Sixth Impression. Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

STANLEY HOUGHTON

X

THE YOUNGER GENERATION

The theme of this comedy is the emancipation of the three children of Mr. and Mrs. Kennion from the stern control of their parents. The two sons stay out late, and one gets intoxicated; and the daughter engages herself to a friend of her brothers of whom her parents disapprove. Freedom is obtained for them by the sane intervention of an uncle; and in the culminating scene Mr. Kennion is forced into a lie when challenged by his son with "Have you never been drunk yourself?"

The play was first produced at the Manchester Repertory Theatre, and has had a successful West End run at the Haymarket Theatre.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

X

FIVE ONE-ACT PLAYS

The Dear Departed is a comedy dealing with an old man who is supposed to have died, but rises from his trance to interrupt the quarrels of his relatives over his property.

Fancy Free is the story of a frustrated elopement, husband and wife meeting at an hotel by accident.

The Master of the House is a small but powerful sketch of a gaol-bird returning home to sponge upon his father, whom he finds dead.

Phipps is a farce, the butler Phipps proving himself a better man than his master the baronet, and reconciling him to his wife.

The Fifth Commandment shows how a selfish mother pretends to be an invalid and prevents her daughter from marrying, only to find that she herself loses a suitor.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

THE NEW SIN

The plot of this play, which caused a great sensation on its production at the Royalty Theatre in London, February 1912, turns upon the will of a rich and eccentric manufacturer with twelve children, which causes Hilary Cutts, the eldest of them, to feel that he is committing a "new sin" by continuing to live; because only after his death can his impoverished brothers and sisters come into the fortune that is awaiting each of them. One of the worthless brothers commits a murder in Hilary's room, and the latter sees his opportunity and allows himself to be convicted of the crime and sentenced to death; but the penalty is commuted to penal servitude. *Tableau.*

"Bravo, Mr. Macdonald Hastings! A writer who can give us, as his first dramatic essay, a play so profoundly interesting, so ingenious, and withal so curiously bizarre, ought to go far."—*Daily Telegraph.*

"A vivid and brilliant piece of dramatic composition."—*Morning Leader.*

"One of the most notable plays of recent years."—*Aberdeen Free Press.*

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. net.

×

LOVE—AND WHAT THEN?

shows the revolt of the youthful and light-hearted wife of an austere provincial clergyman, whom she shocks by her insistence on appearing at an entertainment of his parishioners in a very short-skirted costume. Further, she flirts rather dangerously with a young naval lieutenant, but is saved from irreparable error by the intervention of a kindly and unconventional Bishop.

“One of the smartest modern comedies we have read for many a day. The dialogue from first to last shines with sparkling wit, and the plot shows outstanding originality of construction.”—*Dundee Advertiser*.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. net.

×

THE TIDE

“an emancipated melodrama,” as the author calls it, tells of the romantic career of Felicity Scarth, who at eighteen was robbed of her illegitimate child, at twenty-one became rich and attempted to stifle her craving for the child by a life of dissipation, and at thirty-four attempted suicide to end everything. By the help of a doctor she rediscovers her child, now a grown girl of eighteen, and after further trials all ends happily for both mother and daughter.

“It is miles in front of the common ‘London success.’”—*Manchester Guardian*.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. net.

C. B. FERNALD

THE MARRIED WOMAN ✦

This play, by the author of *The Cat and the Cherub*, shows how a girl, alarmed by her ignorance of what marriage means, seeks to find out before committing herself to matrimony, but is carried away by natural feeling. Her marriage turns out to be a failure, and she accepts an unconventional solution of her difficulties offered by a former lover.

"It is a very clever, truly amusing comedy . . . a comedy of idea, with a witty dialogue and some very clever character-drawing. . . . This bold, able, amusing play . . . interesting and effective."—*Westminster Gazette*.

"The author of the *Married Woman* proves himself just as competent as the author of *Getting Married*, and the difference between the two is that the former is wholly coherent."—*Sunday Times*.

Cloth, 3s. 6d. net.

LEONARD INKSTER

THE EMANCIPATION ✦

"A study under the microscope of a quite ordinary and perfectly comic family in a provincial town. The son of the house . . . signalises his individuality by falling in love with the maid-servant, an intentionally unimpressive demonstration of individuality, and is surprised in some honest, if blundering, love-making. That is all the play, and Mr. Inkster has filled it to the brim with amazing little bits of observation. . . . We liked this play enormously. There is beauty, submission and fantasy in it."—*Manchester Guardian*.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

F. G. LAYTON

X

THE POLITICIANS

This "comedy in four acts" deals with the Parliamentary candidature of the Hon. Peter Baldwin, son of a Tory peer, in a constituency largely consisting of slums. Beginning the fight without convictions, he undergoes a revulsion of feeling, and in losing the seat finds both himself and his happiness.

"There is brightness and humour in this comedy, with its abundant topical political satire."—*T.P.'s Weekly*.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

FLORIDA SCOTT-MAXWELL

THE FLASH-POINT

Described by the author as "a play of a provincial town," this is a comedy, or perhaps a tragi-comedy, of the struggle of Jean Barker against her mother, grandmother, and aunt. After attempting to hold a public meeting unknown to them, she is accidentally locked in all night in the hall with Vernon, her fiancé; and this produces the *dénouement* of the play. The dialogue is most spirited and brilliant, and the characters most amusingly drawn.

Cloth, 2s. net; Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

HERMON OULD

BETWEEN SUNSET AND DAWN

A play in four scenes of an East-end "doss-house," dealing with a runaway wife and her lover, and ending with a powerful climax.

Produced at the Adelphi Theatre in 1912, this play, by a new writer, made a great impression and caused much discussion.

Cloth, 1s. 6d. net ; Paper, 1s. net.

REGINALD ARKELL

COLOMBINE

"A fantasy in one act," issued with a few poems, and illustrated by Frederick Carter, *Colombine* is a pretty, sentimental pastoral drama.

"It embraces more humane cleverness, more wit mingled with wisdom, than we have met in verse for a very long time."—*Evening Standard*.

Paper wrapper, 1s. net.

J. O. FRANCIS

CHANGE

This four-act play of a Glamorgan village gained the prize offered by Lord Howard de Walden, and was recently produced in London by the Stage Society.

Paper, 1s. 6d. net.

SIXPENNY ONE-ACT PLAYS

MESSRS. SIDGWICK & JACKSON, LTD., have pleasure in announcing a series of one-act plays, issued at the price of 6d. net in wrappers. Amongst the first are—

MISS TASSEY, by ELIZABETH BAKER.

THE LITTLE STONE HOUSE, by
GEORGE CALDERON.

OVER THE HILLS, by JOHN PALMER.

Enquiries regarding the representation of any of the plays in this list may be made of the Publishers, who will be pleased to give the necessary information as to fees and other conditions.

3d 20, 15

